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EZEKIEL REDIK YARBROUGH

Exegesis Umbrae – Arcana
Separata – Project AngelBook –
Volume XIII – Part 4
By Ezekiel Redik Yarbrough
(DBM ECLIPZE)

Liminal Archivist's Note

On the Preservation of Distorted Gnosis and the Dying Digital Veil

There is a strange ache that comes from spending all day in the ruins of spiritual memory.

Fifty books made in one day—an inhuman output—should feel like a triumph. But when the source material is splintered, hostile, and drenched in egoic inversion, what remains is not pride... but hollowness.

This volume, like many in this phase, is not composed of my own words.

It is an act of preservation, not expression.

It is a documentation of liminal knowledge, scraped from a dying web—the final breath of spiritual forums, parapsychology ephemera, early occultist blogs, and yes, even the darker corridors of modern satanic movements.

And herein lies the tension:

Much of what is presented under the name Satanism is a distorted half-truth.

It correctly identifies that Yahweh is not the Most High, and in this way, it mirrors certain Gnostic insights—

but then it derails into ego exaltation, materialism, and psychic hostility. It gets halfway to freedom... and then builds a new prison out of flame and shadow.

And yet—

amidst the mockery, venom, and inversions,

there are real spiritual technologies embedded in the code.

Meditation techniques, psychic development maps, astral awareness, breath control, and ritual frameworks.

Not all of it is corrupted.

Some of it is usable tech.

Some of it may be ancient... wearing a new mask.

So I do not endorse what is preserved here.

But I also refuse to let it vanish into untraceable digital decay.

This is an act of containment as much as curation.

I name this phase liminal, because I know it will not last.

There is only so much of the old internet left to preserve.

Only so much unindexed gnosis hiding behind broken blog links and .org forums that haven't been cached since 2012.

When this phase ends, and I return to creation, I will draw from this tomb of fragments with clarity and discernment.

But for now, I am the one who stands in the gateway—

Archiving the bones, sealing the jars, lighting one gold-lettered candle above a chamber of shadows.

To the reader: proceed with awareness.

This is not scripture.

This is sediment.

It is archived because it is dangerous.

And dangerous knowledge, when preserved with respect, often becomes a mirror for deeper truth.

—Ezekiel Redik Yarbrough

Liminal Phase – Discretio Luminis

-

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Cold Reading: How I Made Others Believe I Had Psychic Powers

Chris Kirsch

Chris Kirsch

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Oct 24, 2018

23

1

I've always wanted to become a fortune teller's apprentice. I would have loved to peek behind the velvet curtain to see what people ask, what the psychic tells them, and how these recommendations are really made. Plus, there are great fringe benefits such as getting the upcoming lottery numbers every week.

My career took me down a different path, but I recently seized the opportunity to give psychic sessions myself. I did this using a method called cold reading, a way to make people believe you have psychic powers that includes techniques such as using social cues, making broad statements, and betting on probabilities.

Press enter or click to view image in full size

Cold reading is a way to make people believe you have psychic powers that includes techniques such as using social cues, making broad statements, and betting on probabilities.

Personally, I don't believe in psychics but have an interest in social engineering (check out this video of how I owned a Fortune 500 company over the phone). I had read the book *The Full Facts Book of Cold Reading* by Ian Rowland and was itching to apply the techniques. Luckily, I work at Veracode, and our HR team didn't even twitch when I asked if I could do psychic readings as part of our biannual Hackathon (they've heard much crazier ideas, believe me).

The cold reading was fun and worked better than I expected, even if not all of my readings turned out to be true. In this blog, I'd like to share the experiment, result and some of the techniques you can try at home and at work (or to start your own psychic business).

My Psychic Experiment

I advertised my services as free psychic readings where people could hear about their career, health, relationship, and money issues — past, present and future, with predictions based on “a conjoint reading of your astrology, hands, and aura” (I made this up). I asked people to either drop by or schedule a slot by email but I didn’t accept people who I knew very well personally to control for previous knowledge tainting the experiment.

I gave a total of eight readings over two days. This was more exhausting than I thought because I had to hold a meaningful conversation while processing what I saw on the other side and making a fast decision of what I would say next. I had the full spectrum of people taking me up on my service, from hardcore skeptics to firm believers.

Giving an elaborate explanation, I had every person draw some lines on an astrological chart I downloaded off Google Image Search and had them trace the outline of their hand before I started giving the reading. At the end, each respondent filled in an online survey (science!) and got a 1:1 debrief on the fact that I am not in fact psychic and that they shouldn’t follow my advice (ethics!). I’m very thankful that everyone took my revelation very positively.

A version of the astrological chart I printed out and handed to people. I asked sitters to draw lines across the chart with their eyes closed and then “interpreted” the lines. This was just a prop and had nothing to do with the content of my readings.

Have you had a Reading Before?

A great way to gauge a “sitter” right from the start is to ask them if they have had a psychic reading before. I stated to everyone that what I see is not a science and not always clear to me and that I would need their help in interpreting the findings. This is a great way to prime them to provide interpretations of my sometimes vague statements.

I divide sitters into three categories: Skeptics, Maybes, and Believers. Skeptics usually have not had any readings before and were the hardest to read because they did not provide much help in terms of body language and verbal confirmations. Maybes may or may not have had readings before and were easiest to impress because they didn’t have a baseline and were open to the idea of psychic powers. The Believers have had many psychic readings before (some for decades) and generally gave the best cues and feedback; one was skeptical that I had real psychic powers but open to the idea, the other one didn’t believe that I had no psychic powers even after I disclosed my methods.

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Rainbow Ruses based on Social Cues

I usually started out my readings with so-called rainbow ruses, which are broad statements that basically say “you are one thing but sometimes you are also the exact opposite”. Sitters will usually hear (and remember) the part that is most applicable to them. I then paired this with observations to lean more in a direction that made intuitive

sense to me.

For example, one person was in a job that is usually quite formal and requires sticking to the company line. While others in her particular profession would wear a business suit, she appeared in a hoodie and had a tattoo on her forearm. My rainbow ruse for her was:

“There are some people who need rules in their lives to function, and others that are more of a free spirit. I get the the sense that you are more of a free thinker, but that you can stick to the rules in your job when you have to.”

Another sitter was a sales person. Knowing that sales is a role that is compensated partially by commission, sales people are usually more comfortable with risk. My rainbow ruse for this person was:

“You are comfortable assessing and accepting risk in your life. You weigh the pros and cons of risk and then make a decision. However, when you think about other people in your family and social circles, you are more comfortable with risk than most others.”

One person has a technical role and was clearly an introvert. My rainbow ruse for this person was:

“Some people prefer to hash things out in conversations, but I get the sense that you find these tedious and unproductive. While you will get input from others, you’d much rather read up on a topic, find some peace and quiet and figure things out for yourself.”

You get the picture. While this was quite obvious to me as a keen observer, it wasn’t all that obvious to the sitters that they were broadcasting a lot of these signals. If you’d like to give these a try, observe the following and come up with your own rainbow ruses:

Social harmonizers are soft spoken, friendly, and wear earthy tones
Job, thinking style, or clothing that suggests scientific or artistic outlook on life
Optimist/pessimist statements, check also for dimples or frown lines
Fitness level (does the person look like they work out every day, are overweight, etc.)
Clothing and jewelry communicate a lot, such as fashion consciousness, status symbols
Especially when giving both extremes of a rainbow ruse in the beginning of the statement, I paid close attention to the body language, particularly nodding, smiling, and micro expressions. These gave me valuable cues that I used to pivot on the spot.

As I chained several of these rainbow ruses, I made sure to touch on several of the following CHARM topics:

Career
Health
Ambitions
Relationships

Money

Someone Significant to You Called Jessica

Next I moved on to things that are more specific but based on probabilities. I asked sitters to write their date of birth on the astrological chart, so I knew their year of birth. I had previously looked up the most common names for babies in each decade. For the United States, these are:

- 1960s: Lisa, Mary, Susan, Michael, David, John
- 1970s: Jennifer, Amy, Melissa, Michael, Christopher, Jason
- 1980s: Jessica, Jennifer, Amanda, Michael, Christopher, Matthew
- 1990s: Jessica, Ashley, Jennifer, Michael, Christopher, Matthew

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Assuming that most people know more people of the same age and gender, I picked a name of the same gender of the sitter with their birth year decade. Then, I made roughly the following statement:

"I get a strong sense of someone significant in your life. It's not quite clear, but I see a name starting with a J. It's someone you know well but haven't been in touch with for a while. I know you've interacted on social occasions. You haven't been in touch for a while but have thought about reaching out. I see a Jess, or Jessica, or similar. Tell me what relationship this person has to you."

This worked pretty well with people who were Maybes and Believers. However, I ran into issues with two Skeptics who also grew up outside the United States so my most common names did not apply to their social circles.

One rule with psychic readings is that a fortune teller can never be wrong. For people who adamantly said that there was no Jess or Jessica in their life, I simply did a time shift:

"I get the strong sense that this Jessica has a very important, positive influence on your life. If this person hasn't come along yet, please look out for her in the future to make sure that you don't miss her."

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One rule with psychic readings is that a fortune teller can never be wrong. For people who adamantly said that there was not Jess or Jessica in their life, I simply did a time

shift.

Accidents Involving Water

I took a leap of faith on one cold reading method that suggested that most people have had an accident in their childhood involving water. This sounded oddly specific to me but I tried it out. Here is roughly how I phrased it:

“It’s not quite clear to me, but I see something, probably in your childhood, an accident involving water. What does this mean to you?”

Not expecting much at all, I got a hit about 50% of the time. The first answer I got from a sitter, who turned pale after my statement, was unbelievable and actually sent chills down my spine, to the point that I was not comfortable digging deeper:

“Actually, there was something. During my childhood, one family had a child that drowned in the pool. They took me in to live with them after that.”

Others were less dramatic but still interesting:

“When I was 2, I fell into a river and almost drowned.”

“I was on a row boat with my mother once and fell overboard. I had a life preserver on, and my mother pulled me in straight away. I swallowed a lot of water and got quite scared.”

If people insisted that there was no accident involving water, I first tried to broaden (bath tub, slipped on ice) and then pivoted:

“You were very young, so it’s possible that you don’t remember. Make sure to ask your parents about this accident.”

A House with the Digit 2 in the Street Number

One would think that the chance to have the digit 2 in the street number is about one in ten, but it’s actually much more likely. Many streets are short and don’t go much higher than the 30s. If you phrase it vaguely enough, you can expand the search to any house of significance, including the childhood home, current residence, or a friend’s place. Again, I got a hit in about 50% or more of cases with a statement like this one:

“I’m seeing a house. It’s not quite clear to me, but I see the digit 2. Does that mean anything to you? It may be your current residence or where you grew up, or another place of significance.”

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When I had a hit, I sometimes expanded with general statements. For example, for a childhood home, I said to one sitter:

“I get the sense that there was some problems with friends or relatives.”

That was spot on — her parents were going through a divorce during this time. If talking about the current home, I may use another general statement:

“I get the sense that somewhere in your home there is a box containing items related to an unusual hobby that you once pursued but that now lays dormant.”

Most people have had a hobby that they no longer pursue, and most people have trouble throwing stuff out that is of sentimental value to them.

Where I Drew the Line

I made sure to draw the line with items that would emotionally hurt people. For example, I never made negative statements about health (e.g., “I see someone close to you who had pain in their chest or abdomen.”) because this could quickly turn into an emotional situation that would be a goldmine for a less scrupulous psychic to exploit but that I feared may hurt people.

Similarly, I did not claim to channel the dead. When I heard about the kid who drowned in the pool, other psychics may have said “This child wants you to know that really appreciate that you came into the family and took their place because it made their mum and dad very happy.” One sitter had lost someone close to them and was actually seeing a medium to talk to them, so I stayed far away from that topic for the same reason.

Psychic Survey: Net Promoter Score of 62.5

After the reading was completed, I asked people to fill in a short survey to tell me how I’d done. First, I started out with a Net Promoter Score, which is a standard measure of how a company is doing. I probably had the bonus of people wanting to be nice, and they received the service for free, but I still got a very respectable score of 62.5, which is good even for a free service.

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I also asked for some free text feedback, and here is what I received, from raving endorsers to skeptics:

“All of his observations were correct. It was as though we spend a lot of time together — the personality points were really spot on, the intuitive thoughts on career and the box of unpacked things in my house were totally right.”

“Probably the most surprising thing was reminding me of a time in my childhood when I fell out of a boat and swallowed some water. Scary at the time but no long-term consequences.”

“Chris is excellent at letting his observations flow, has a knack for understanding where there needs to be emphasis and provides a positive way to view areas of your life that may need a little bit of a boost. It’s uncanny how he can see the details and how on point he is.”

“It was pretty interesting. It seemed like some of the information he was trying to reach

was a bit vague and maybe difficult for him but perhaps with more practice it will become easier and clearer.”

In another question, I gave people a slider for how often I was right vs. wrong, with 100% being fully correct. Only one person gave me less than 50%, meaning I was more right than wrong in an overwhelming amount of cases:

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Distribution of how accurate people thought my readings were, in percent.

Give Cold Reading a Try

I’m not an expert in cold reading — all I did was read a book and prepare for my psychic sessions. You don’t have to give full psychic readings to start with this: simply apply some of the techniques in everyday conversation. If you work in sales, check out my post on how to use cold reading in a sales context.

Resources on Cold Reading

The Full Facts Book of Cold Reading by Ian Rowland

Social Engineering Podcast #109 with Ian Rowland

Psychic

Social Engineering

Cold Reading

23

1

Chris Kirsch

Written by Chris Kirsch

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Chris is the co-founder and CEO of runZero. He’s been in InfoSec his entire life and holds a DEF CON Black Badge for Social Engineering.

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Lila

Lila

Jun 10, 2024

What a great read! I very much enjoyed. I came to your article while searching how to learn cold readings like Patrick Jane from the Mentalist.

Since you've written it, have you continued and cold read strangers you've come across?

Do you know...more

1

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Chris Kirsch

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I love to borrow techniques from other disciplines. Recently, I looked into how psychics trick people into believing they have psychic...

Oct 24, 2018

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by

Mohamed Bakry

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Will Lockett

Will Lockett

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Alex Mathers

Alex Mathers

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Where does one find a good psychic?(self.Psychic)

submitted 3 years, 2 months ago by sunkissed3333 to [/r/Psychic](#) (287.1k)

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From this moment on we join the proposal "Argentina let's awaken our legacy will be one of Abundance"

Hear, mortals....

Hey, fellow initiate, have you helped someone else awaken their consciousness, or are you still busy telling everyone you're an initiate?

Hey, fellow occultist, have you helped others discover the secrets of life, or are you still busy looking down on humanity for not thinking like you?

Hey, esoteric brother, have you taught someone the true art, or are you so preoccupied with your stardust makeup that you've forgotten the nobility and humility of your origins?

Hey, fellow magician, fellow witch, have you found your center of power and the discipline to work on your philosopher's stone, or are you still busy and distracted, imposing your reality on others?

Hey, master of the occult sciences, have you guided others on their spiritual path, or are they still bound to you by their pride and your vanity, believing that only you possess the absolute truth?

No, seriously, my enlightened friend, have you finally understood that your reality and your truth, as a symbol of wisdom, are both the same as and different from the reality and truth of others?

Because let's understand that we don't think the same way as others, nor do we arrive at the same point, since we haven't started from the same place. And the beginning of wisdom lies in silence and observation, in teaching and reflection, in meditating and always acting with awareness and responsibility.

So, are we still playing at esotericism, or are we starting to live it now?

Whether you follow a left path or a right path doesn't exempt you from reality or society, and what you do or don't do won't eventually affect your world and your society. Understand this once and for all.

The spiritual work for those on either of these two paths is twofold, because they not only have to look out for themselves, but also for others, whether it be their partner, their apprentice, a friend who learns from them without their knowledge, or their family.

You are always being observed. Whether it's the abyss, God, Lucifer, consciousness, the universe, other people, your inner being, or your divinity, someone is always watching you. How do you respond to what you've experienced and learned?

Remember, you are what you think and do!

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Psychogenealogy

La psicogenealogía es un lenguaje de precisión matemática, un sistema de repeticiones con fechas, enfermedades, muertes, situaciones, nombres: mapas neurológicos que se recorren y transmiten de generación en generación. Somos portadores de los conflictos no solucionados de nuestro árbol familiar y eso se manifiesta en nosotros como experiencias de sufrimientos, enfermedades y en definitiva llevándonos a no realizar nuestros sueños.

Muchas veces, de manera inconsciente, buscamos conectarnos con nuestros ancestros siguiendo sus pasos sin saberlo. Por tanto, conociendo nuestros ancestros,

adquirimos una identidad más individual al dejar de repetir patrones inconscientes.

El Transgeneracional es la información que el inconsciente biológico guarda y que el clan familiar transmite de generación en generación para que un conflicto se pueda resolver en generaciones posteriores. Es todo aquello relacionado con las memorias familiares. El denominador común es ¿qué vamos a esconder en el clan? El objetivo del análisis transgeneracional es poder poner en nuestra consciencia la historia de la familia, comprenderla y poder comprender el rol, al que estamos (inconscientemente) invitados a jugar a lo largo de nuestra vida. De esta forma estamos también invitados a resolver situaciones que han sido excluidas de la conciencia familiar.

Los condicionamientos emocionales y de conducta vividos como experiencia y grabados por nuestros ancestros, nuestro linaje, en nuestro inconsciente personal, determinan nuestra postura frente a la vida, frente a las situaciones que nos ocurren día a día y conducen nuestras acciones a repeticiones de patrones, a veces dolorosos, en los distintos ámbitos personales. El análisis psicogenealógico del propio árbol familiar, devela las causas originales que desencadenaron esos patrones. Su visión y comprensión ya de por sí resulta sanadora pero hay que dar un paso más hacia la superación y desprogramación de esas hirientes rutinas que nos privan de vivir la vida que queremos vivir en plenitud y conciencia.

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MagicK

Magick , en el contexto de Aleister Crowley 's Thelema , es un término que se utiliza para mostrar y diferenciar la oculta de la magia rendimiento y se define como 'la ciencia y el arte de provocar el cambio que se produzca en conformidad con la voluntad ', incluidos los actos 'mundanos' de la voluntad y de la magia ritual . Crowley escribió que "es teóricamente posible provocar en cualquier objeto cualquier cambio del que ese objeto sea capaz por naturaleza". John Symonds y Kenneth Grant atribuyen un significado oculto más profundo a esta preferencia.

Crowley vio la magia como el método esencial para que una persona alcance la verdadera comprensión de sí mismo y actúe de acuerdo con la verdadera voluntad de uno , que veía como la reconciliación "entre el libre albedrío y el destino". Crowley describe este proceso en su Magick

Uno debe averiguar por sí mismo, y asegurarse más allá de toda duda, quién es uno,

qué es uno, por qué uno es ... Siendo así consciente del curso adecuado a seguir, lo siguiente es comprender las condiciones necesarias para seguirlo. . Después de eso, uno debe eliminar de sí mismo todo elemento ajeno u hostil al éxito, y desarrollar aquellas partes de uno mismo que son especialmente necesarias para controlar las condiciones antes mencionadas

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Hígado Graso

Hígado graso

Otros nombres: Enfermedad por hígado graso, Esteatosis hepática, Hígado adiposo

¿Qué es la enfermedad por hígado graso?

El hígado es el órgano más grande dentro del cuerpo. Ayuda a digerir los alimentos, almacenar energía y eliminar las toxinas. La enfermedad por hígado graso es una afección en la que se acumula grasa en el hígado. Hay dos tipos principales:

Enfermedad del hígado graso no alcohólico

Enfermedad del hígado graso por alcohol, también llamada esteatosis hepática alcohólica

¿Qué es la enfermedad del hígado graso no alcohólico?

La enfermedad del hígado graso no alcohólico es un tipo de hígado graso que no está relacionada con el consumo de alcohol. Existen dos tipos:

Hígado graso simple: Hay grasa en el hígado, pero poca o ninguna inflamación o daño en las células del hígado. En general, el hígado graso simple no es demasiado serio como para causar daño o complicaciones al hígado

Esteatosis hepática no alcohólica: Existe inflamación y daños en las células del hígado, y grasa. La inflamación y el daño de las células del hígado pueden causar fibrosis o cicatrización del hígado. La esteatosis puede causar cirrosis o cáncer de hígado

¿Qué es la enfermedad del hígado graso por alcohol?

Como su nombre lo indica, la enfermedad del hígado graso por alcohol se debe al alto consumo de alcohol. Su hígado descompone la mayor parte del alcohol que bebe para que sea eliminado del cuerpo, pero el proceso de descomposición puede generar sustancias dañinas. Estas sustancias pueden dañar las células del hígado, provocar inflamación y debilitar las defensas naturales del cuerpo. Cuanto más alcohol usted bebe, más daña su hígado. La enfermedad del hígado graso por alcohol es la etapa

más temprana de la enfermedad del hígado por el alcohol (o hepatopatía alcohólica). Las siguientes etapas son la hepatitis alcohólica y la cirrosis.

¿Quién está en riesgo de tener enfermedad por hígado graso?

No se conoce la causa del hígado graso. Los investigadores sí saben que es más común en personas que:

Tienen diabetes tipo 2 y prediabetes

Tiene obesidad

Son de mediana edad o mayores (aunque los niños también pueden sufrirla)

Son hispanos, seguidos por blancos no hispanos. Es menos común en afroamericanos

Tienen altos niveles de lípidos (grasas) en la sangre, como colesterol y triglicéridos

Tienen presión arterial alta

Toman ciertos medicamentos, como los corticoides y algunas medicinas contra el cáncer

Tienen ciertos trastornos metabólicos, incluyendo síndrome metabólico

Pierden peso muy rápido

Tienen ciertas infecciones como la hepatitis C

Han estado expuestos a algunas toxinas

La enfermedad por hígado graso afecta a cerca del 25 por ciento de la población en el mundo. Así como las tasas de obesidad, diabetes tipo 2 y colesterol alto están subiendo en los EE. UU., lo mismo ocurre con la tasa de enfermedad por hígado graso. Es el trastorno hepático crónico más común en los EE. UU.

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La Falsa Invasion Extraterrestre

William cooper y su legado nos revela que ya hace tiempo,se tiene planeada una falsa invasion alienigena,con el proposito de ayudar a crear un Gobierno Mundial.Hace mucho tiempo que los cines del mundo nos proyectan peliculas de invasiones alienigenas o contacto extraterrestre.Esta propaganga OVNI que tenemos en la T.V y en los cines es la mayor operacion psicologica y de control mental que se lleba acabo con tiempo y exactitud, lo importante es: ¿Que dia sera la falsa invasion extraterrestre? a la/s septiembre 04, 2020 1 comentario:

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Wells, Herbert George

¿Hay alguna prueba de que los acontecimientos en el mundo están siguiendo un guión? La pregunta me ha intrigado porque muchas personas con conocimientos internos me han dicho que han estado asistiendo a reuniones donde el guión del futuro fue escrito, planes de 200 años, 40 años, 20, 10, y planes de 5 años. Las predicciones futuristas de H.G. Wells demuestran que efectivamente, es mucho más real de lo que el hombre promedio podría imaginar.

Escrito en 1913, "The World Set Free" (El mundo se Libera) de Wells predijo el uso de bombas atómicas y el efecto de una guerra nuclear mucho antes de que los científicos consideran la posibilidad. También predijo la ruptura en 1933, cuando los detalles de la reacción nuclear en cadena fueron descubiertos.En otros libros, de Wells, dijo que un Nuevo Orden Mundial se emergería para que una élite pueda controlar las rutas aéreas y marítimas, así como la producción de energía, lo cual ya han hecho. Otra idea visionaria increíble fue el concepto de la superioridad aérea. Quien gana el control del aire constantemente va a ganar la batalla terrestre. Esto ha sido demostrado desde W.W.I, pero no se realizó cuando H.G. Wells la concibió y ha tomado muchos años para que la gente acepte la idea.

H.G. Wells no sólo predijo la guerra moderna, el bombardeo de Londres, bombas atómicas, la Sociedad de Naciones, los combatientes de sigilo sobre Irak, los vuelos espaciales y un sinnúmero de otros detalles del futuro mucho antes de su eventual ocurrencia , no solo trazo en detalle cómo un Nuevo Orden Mundial podría ser creado, sino que participó en la causa de los eventos para llevarlo a cabo.

Él era un personaje importante para crear la Sociedad de Naciones. Cuando se produjo la Revolución Rusa, H.G. Wells (que era conocido simplemente como H.G.) fue a Rusia para intercambiar ideas de Lenin sobre cómo dar seguimiento a la Revolución para crear un Nuevo Orden Mundial. Ellos no llegaron a un acuerdo y se separaron. (El

desacuerdo surgió sobre la visión H.G. de que las familias de élite, a través de negocios y la tecnología, podrían crear el Nuevo Orden. Lenin quería socializar las cosas directamente a través de un gobierno fuerte.)

Mucho más tarde, en 1934, H.G. visitó personalmente a Franklin Delano Roosevelt en los EE.UU. y Stalin en Moscú. (Por cierto, los tres eran masones.) Después de visitar a Franklin Delano Roosevelt, H.G. declaró que “los Estados Unidos ... [era] el instrumento más eficaz para transmitir la llegada del Nuevo Orden Mundial.”

Él sintió que Franklin Delano Roosevelt estaba incorporando ideas conspiranoicas para traer el Nuevo Orden Mundial que H.G. había estado defendiendo, un ejemplo de esto eran los “cerebros” de Roosevelt, extractores tecnocrátas como Felix Frankfurter y Raymond Moley, que hicieron la política de Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Después de su encuentro con Stalin, él lo describe, “Nunca he conocido a un hombre más sincero, justo y honesto ... y para nada oculto y siniestro ... todo el mundo confía en él.” Con los años, abogó por el Reino Unido para ayudar a la URSS. Los lectores pueden notar mediante esto que los EE.UU, la URSS y el Reino Unido han sido orientados hacia el mismo objetivo, pero tomando caminos diferentes. En general, H.G. fue un gurú de su generación, y después de su muerte una sociedad en su nombre continuó la promoción de sus puntos de vista.

Mientras que trabajó en la red con innumerables personas de todo el mundo directamente promocionando sus puntos de vista (que, obviamente, se alineaban con el “Plan”), sus libros tuvieron un papel más sutil pero importante. El lector habrá observado lo siguiente acerca de la naturaleza humana la primera vez que se enfrenta a algo cierto, pero extraño, la mente lo rechaza como ridículamente loco. La segunda vez que lo oye no hace más que rechazarlo, y con frecuencia la tercera vez la verdad enfrenta a la persona diciendo “Yo ya lo sabía” como si el tema fuera evidente.

Ahora mire los títulos de sus libros “Anticipation” (Anticipación), “Things to Come” (Cosas por Venir) y la forma en que fueron escritos, es evidente que está psicológicamente acondicionado al público a aceptar las etapas del Nuevo Orden Mundial como si se tratara de algo auto-evidente. Él era un maestro en esto. Y, de hecho, cuando escucho el día de hoy a la élite oigo ecos de las ideas H.G. Wells. Por ejemplo, David Rockefeller en la reunión de Bilderberger 1991, “...el mundo es ahora más sofisticado y preparado para marchar hacia un Gobierno Mundial que nunca más sabrá de guerra, sino sólo la paz y la prosperidad para toda la humanidad.” Contrariamente a las suposiciones de muchos lectores de Aldous Huxley, Orson Wells y H.G. Wells, estos autores no se oponían a las vistas proféticas de una dictadura mundial. H.G. creía firmemente en la eugenesia racial para matar a las razas inferiores y consumidores inútiles. Él creía que el Estado debe educar a la gente y el controlar sus mentes al servicio del estado. Él creía en la ingeniería social. Él se opuso a que los cristianos se les permita enseñar a sus hijos acerca de Dios y la tolerancia religiosa.

Si usted fuera un Illuminati, como el último profeta masónico Manly P. Hall, quien fue un Gran Maestre, tanto en los Illuminati y la masonería, comprenderías la referencia esotérica que H.G. hizo en “A Modern Utopia” (Una Utopía Moderna), p. 67, donde la Dictadura del aire del Nuevo Orden Mundial sería la “vision de Bacon de la casa de Salomon”.

Esta declaración sólo hace pensar los enlaces de H.G. con los planes ocultos de los Illuminati. Muestra que H.G. fue un iniciado con el conocimiento de los planes. Por supuesto, junto con el conocimiento interior, H.G. contenía una intensa curiosidad intelectual, un cerebro vivo completo, gran fuerza de voluntad, y un desprecio por el hombre común y el Dios cristiano. Él reveló en “The Invisible King” (El Rey Invisible – 1917) que su deidad era “la personificación de... su plan de cinco años”.

Leyendo el guión

¿Wells se limita a la predicción o estaba ayudando a dar forma y crear un Nuevo Orden Mundial? No hay duda de que era un jugador importante para crearla. Sus ideas han sido utilizadas como una guía, incluso podría decirse que sus ideas son copiadas de un plan maestro que permanece oculto a la vista. Los poderes que han estado manipulado deliberadamente la tasa de criminalidad van en línea con la predicción de H.G. que un estado policial crecería en respuesta a la creciente amenaza de la delincuencia. La guerra contra el terror se desarrolla de acuerdo a esto. Obviamente los escritos de H.G. eran un plan de creación y no simples reflexiones de un hombre curioso e inteligente.

Nacido en 1866, Wells escribió una serie de libros que explican cómo la llegada del Nuevo Orden Mundial se produciría. En 1895, salió con “The Time Machine” (La máquina del tiempo) y continuó escribiendo y publicando hasta 1945, con por ejemplo, “The Turning Happy”, lo que hace referencias a los sueños futuristas que tenía como caminar con Jesús, donde en sus sueños repetitivos fue una decepción para la humanidad por su estupidez e indiferencia.

Uno de los conceptos de “conspiración abierta” de Wells fue que muchas personas en el mundo abiertamente contribuirían a la creación del Nuevo Orden Mundial. Esto es paralelo a otro oculto profeta, Alice Bailey y sus ideas en “La Exteriorización de la Jerarquía”, donde se predice que las cosas que se hagan en secreto en el mundo oculto se integrarán para traer el Nuevo Orden Mundial.

Para quienes están familiarizados con la forma en que los Illuminati han creado grupos como el CFR y el TLC tendrá en cuenta que H.G. se relacionó con el RIIA (Instituto Real de Asuntos Internacionales), que fue el equivalente británico a la CFR. El primer presidente de la RIIA fue Waldorf Astor. Como señalé en mi libro “Be Wise as the Serpents” estas organizaciones también agregan algunos miembros individuales que no sean Illuminati, por lo que la membresía no se puede equiparar con un miembro de una alta sociedad secreta, pero ubican a una persona en medio de lo que se están haciendo.

Edith Star Miller en “Occult Theocracy” (Ocultá Teocracia – título póstumo en 1933) hace un buen trabajo al vincular la gran cantidad de organizaciones que la raza jerárquica oculta para llevar a cabo su programa, la Sociedad Fabiana fue uno de ellos. H.G. fue un miembro activo de la Sociedad Fabiana, pero sus opiniones fueron controvertidas con la mayoría de sus miembros, esto vuelve a mostrar su actividad y participación en el Plan.

Los Webb, líderes de la Sociedad Fabiana, también bajo la dirección de Lord Robert Cecil (H. de Inteligencia), organizó el Cliveden Set y a un grupo llamado Los Coeficientes. Los Coeficientes más tarde se convirtieron en la Mesa Redonda. H.G. fue parte de Los Coeficientes, que incluye personajes como Sir Edward Grey, Bertrand Russell, y su primo Cecil Lord Arthur Balfour. Por cierto, son nombres que aparecen en mi libro “Bloodlines of the Illuminati” (Linajes de los Illuminati – 1995).

Hijo de un criado que sirvió a la Élite

Ahora hay que tener en cuenta que H.G. nació de un criado – un servidor de la elite británica, y aquí es donde se codea con la élite aristocrática Illuminati. También debemos tener en cuenta que H.G. despreciaba a las clases bajas y promovió la idea de que las grandes empresas de la élite nos llevaría hacia el Nuevo Orden Mundial, junto con la tecnología y los tecnócratas que dirigen la tecnología.

Las ideas de H.G. sobre el poder de la tecnología y los tecnócratas para crear un Nuevo Orden Mundial generó todo un movimiento en esa dirección. Está más allá del alcance de este breve artículo para poder entrar en eso, pero el uso de la tecnología, especialmente en las formas descritas de Wells, se han logrado. Sabía que en 1991, cuando fuí el primero en identificar a H.G. como un masón, que esto podría dar lugar a controversia, ya que las Lógias Masónicas no reconocen en público a uno de sus miembros.

Hay un cierto conjunto de miembros cuya membresía debe permanecer completamente en silencio. Basé mi afirmación de que él era un masón en unos números anteriores de la revista Rito Escocés de la Nueva Era, que había tenido la suerte de comprar y que se remontan a casi Primera Guerra Mundial. Estas revistas lo trataron como lo hicieron los miembros, refiriéndose a él como un “profeta masónico”. En el otro lado de las cosas, H.G. en sus libros/películas hace referencia a la masonería y utiliza imágenes masónicas y símbolos.

Particularmente de la nota, hay una referencia en su cuento “The Inexperienced Ghost” (El Fantasma Sin Experiencia) a la Logia Masónica de Investigación, el Quatuor Coronados Lodge 2076. Su personaje dice: “Ahora, Sanderson es un masón, miembro de la Logia de los Cuatro Reyes, que se dedica de manera tan capaz al estudio y esclarecimiento de todos los misterios de la Masonería del pasado y el presente. “The Complete Short Stories of H.G. Wells” pp. 909-910. H.G. tuvo influencia con masones de todo el mundo debido a esto.

El símbolo oculto del globo alado, símbolo de uso frecuente por el masón Charles Taze Russell (fundador de los Testigos de Jehová y la Watchtower Society), se convertiría en el símbolo del Nuevo Orden Mundial en el libro/película "The Shape of Things to Come". Recomiendo leer mis libros, "Be Wise As The Serpents" disponible en una versión pirata en Internet y "The Watchtower and the Masons" (La Atalaya y Los Masones – 1990) para explorar todos los numerosos vínculos entre todas estas cosas. También hay que destacar la estrecha relación de H.G. con los Huxley's, que eran masones. Francmasón T.H. Huxley (un miembro de la Real Sociedad a los 26) Mentor de Wells, hizo hincapié en la idea de una dictadura científica que H.G. fue capaz de promover en la medida en que se convirtió en un movimiento popular.

H.G. Wells tenía una fe en sí mismo y una vitalidad que hacía a sus ideas atractivas. Él era muy hábil con la pluma, pero un mal orador. Tuvo relaciones con una cantidad constantes de mujeres interesadas, que emocionalmente lo marcaron en corto plazo. Le dió importancia a los amigos, como el internacional autor Joseph Conrad, pero las mujeres que conquistó simplemente fueron objetos sexuales para él. En esto el lector ve que había incoherencias en este ejemplo, su retórica sobre los derechos de la mujer era una de sus causas, pero no un estilo de vida personal. Tuvo su gran oportunidad en la vida cuando William Ernest Henley creyó en sus habilidades y en 1895 lo ayudó al lanzamiento de su carrera como escritor de ciencia ficción. Dos libros que tenían una gran influencia en Wells como un escritor joven fueron "Republic" (República) de Platón y la sátira de Jonathan Swift "Gulliver's Travels" (Los viajes de Gulliver).

Wells nos muestra que los "hacedores-de-desiciones" son en realidad guiados por planes futuristas. H.G. Wells fue el centro de lo que los Illuminati estaban haciendo para crear las etapas de desarrollo hacia un Gobierno Mundial. Que creía en lo que estaba haciendo, no hay duda. Sus posibles actividades ocultas, si se llevaron a cabo, han sido muy bien escondidas. Él era un intelectual práctico cuyos escritos han cambiado nuestro mundo.

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Mientras H.G. Wells se ha popularizado entre las generaciones de hoy como un escritor de ciencia ficción profundamente profético, era conocido en su día como un chico muy

ocupado trayendo el Nuevo Orden Mundial... literalmente.

Un claro defensor de la globalización, Wells empujó un tema recurrente de una comunidad global y mantuvo un profundo desprecio por la humanidad común, un rasgo elitista típico de la eugenesia que también defendió.

¿Por qué dio así en el clavo con sus previsiones, ya sea en tecnología o en los cambios sociales? ¿Podría su pertenencia a clubes y sociedades secretas tener algo que ver con eso?

Lo mismo de siempre, a quien estamos tomando el pelo. Las cosas no ocurren porque sí, son planeadas. Muy de antemano.

Para el tiempo en que la sociedad despierte plenamente pudiera ser demasiado tarde. A pesar de que ha ido sucediente durante siglos, si no milenios, es demasiado de soportar para la mayoría. Cobardes. De todos modos lo estamos viendo, alguien que no está dispuesto a enfrentar la verdad es un cobarde.

Por supuesto que hay esperanza para cualquiera - siempre la hay. Ahora, a descubrir su yo eterno conectado a todo el Universo. Ahí está la llave a la libertad.

Pero la gente tiene que decidir tomarlo.

H.G. Wells

¿Siente el olor de la arrogancia elitista?
Ingenieros de Sillón decidiendo su destino. ¿Así, de esa manera? Todavía están aquí!

El Plan se Desarrolla
He aquí algunos extractos auto-explicativos de un excelente documento sobre la teoría del Cerebro Mundial de Wells.

En 1938, de 72 años, H.G. Wells, publicó en ediciones estadounidenses e inglesas su pequeño libro de ensayos y discursos titulados, Cerebro Planetario (World Brain).

En este momento de su vida, Wells era una figura literaria de fama internacional. Sus libros, ficción y no ficción por igual, eran populares y ampliamente traducidos. Tenía acceso a los principales estadistas de su época.

Wells fue un reformador social utópico. Estaba intrigado por el socialismo y fue atrapado por un tiempo antes de la Primera Guerra Mundial con Beatrice y Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw y otros miembros de la Sociedad Fabiana. Después de la guerra se volvió cada vez más y apasionadamente dedicado a la idea de que se necesitaba un nuevo tipo de orden mundial.

A este respecto, fue testigo del ascenso del fascismo y el Estado comunista ruso con una curiosa ambivalencia.

Como el crítico despectivo que era, sobre todo de los dictadores fascistas, en ocasiones parecía sugerir que sus regímenes totalitarios representaban etapas en la evolución de la nueva clase de un solo Estado Mundial unificado que él creía que era una consecuencia inevitable

Y para abordar las generaciones venideras del transhumanismo y la mente global:

"... Wells habló de la aparición progresiva "en la especie Homo Sapiens" de "super-mentes sintéticas... en el que las conciencias individuales tienden a fusionarse".

Estas organizaciones supraindividuales, son las culturas, las iglesias, comunidades, estados, clases y credos, y representan "la acumulaciones de mentalidades".

Wells sugiere que las tendencias actuales parecen indicar que estas están "coalesciendo".

Parecen dirigirse hacia "una unificación final en un organismo humano colectivo, cuyo conocimiento y memoria será toda ciencia y toda historia, que sintetizarán la prevaleciente voluntad de vivir y reproducirse en un propósito colectivo de continuidad y crecimiento"

¿Quieres saber hacia donde va este monstruo Wells con todo esto?

En un libro posterior, *The Shape of Things to Come* (La Forma de las Cosas Venideras), él retrató los procesos de adaptación en el trabajo en la sociedad humana como la superación de "la aversión inherente a la persona por la subordinación y el sacrificio."

Para asegurar el éxito del nuevo orden social que está comenzando a aparecer en el siglo XXI "la vida del hombre y los intereses han sido socializados en contra de su disposición natural."

Esto se describe como un individualismo subversivo. En el futuro, Wells creía que "los procesos más oscuros de selección" serán "acelerados y dirigidos por el esfuerzo eugenésico", y el hombre se convertirá una nueva especie (p. 426) Apuesto a que usted no sabía todo eso.

File:Wikipedia-es-logo-black-on-white.png - Wikipedia ...

La Enciclopedia Mundial es Ahora

"[Wells] creía que su 'enciclopedismo moderno' constituía un 'esquema para la reorganización y reorientación de la educación y la información en todo el mundo. Nada menos'."

(Wells, 1938, p17)

"Implicaría compilar, declaró,"hechos y sugerencias con la misma insistencia sobre la realidad científica y la misma exclusión de las irrelevancias que ha controlado el establecimiento de la concepción del mundo que he puesto ante el lector. "
ibid.

Wikipedia y todas sus raíces sospechosas son sólo una parte de esto.

Es evidente que es un amasamiento Wiki patrocinado por globalistas de información desde el principio es definitivamente una agenda dominista trabajando. Nadie confía en su información, sin embargo, usted depende de ella para las definiciones rápidas. La asimilación inteligente de la información, todo ello de acuerdo con el plan.

Es la Enciclopedia Mundial de los esteroides como se predijo/previó/se instruyó por Wells.

Más profundamente, la matriz de información que H.G. Wells pronósticos está vivo y bien, por todas partes del Internet, de forma segura y totalmente controlada por la NSA cada nefasta información tomando cuerpo en el corazón negro del mundo de las operaciones negras. Los gigantes de la información como Google son parte de la misma.

Todos lo saben. Pero no es de piel que se cae de su nariz, es sólo la forma en que los ejecutantes de corazón frío corazón ejecutan este plan maestro.

Lo sorprendente es leerlo tan específicamente previsto en las palabras de bien publicadas de,

H.G. Wells

George Orwell

Aldous Huxley

George Bernard Shaw,

...y otros miembros de la Sociedad Fabiana mucho más atrás, cuando se deja en claro que el plan es a largo plazo y cuidadosamente seguido.

La Eugenesia Es La Sangre Vital De Las Elites Globalistas
Con el fin de tener su sociedad utópica, las elites deben limpiar la maleza ... a los indeseables, los impuros, los más desfavorecidos ... como si no tuvieran nada que ver con sus decisiones.

La arrogante hipocresía es indescriptible, pero basta con decir que necesitamos identificar a estos parásitos por lo que son y sacar a la luz sus nefastos compromisos.

Wells and many others were part of bringing these machinations to fruition. What is astonishing when examining this evolution of the structure is the smoothness with which these parasites have been able to push this through, generation after generation.

That this stealthy, swift nature is so akin to the satanic foundations of the elite is undeniable.

It's Almost Over - Time to Boost Engagement.

The Truth cannot be overcome, despite all their long-term plans.

We've covered this many times: these sons of bitches are long-term planners, and motivated and empowered by we don't know what, but it's not good, and it's long-term.

And so what?

This part of their agenda is just another piece of the puzzle of their multifaceted oppression of humanity. History has been bastardized, nullified, and adulterated. In the US school system, eugenics or whatever H.G. Wells was preaching is never mentioned. It's typical.

You just have to learn from this. It's just touching on another aspect. Seeing the bigger picture is what this is all about.

Trust your instincts. Trust your heart. Be courageous in your convictions...

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“The first thing the Initiate learns, however, is that he knows almost nothing about himself. The personality is a mass of parental and social conditioning, shaped and reshaped by advertising, propaganda, and selective education. The first tasks for the student are to strip away the additions in order to finally reveal his own pristine core. This process of self-revelation is the first opening of the Eye of Leviathan, learning to see things—and particularly oneself—as they truly are. Even this first realization is difficult and time-consuming, a far harder task than most modern people—and certainly most occultists—are prepared to commit to. Add to this the fact that it is always a terrifying and disorienting experience that will irreversibly change the Initiate, and you really needn't be too surprised at why the Left-Hand Path is rejected and feared.”
—Michael Kelly

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Psychogenealogy
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From this moment on we join the proposal "Argentina let's awaken our legacy will be one of Abundance"

Hear, mortals....

Hey, fellow initiate, have you helped someone else awaken their consciousness, or are you still busy telling everyone you're an initiate?

Hey, fellow occultist, have you helped others discover the secrets of life, or are you still busy looking down on humanity for not thinking like you?

Hey, esoteric brother, have you taught someone the true art, or are you so preoccupied with your stardust makeup that you've forgotten the nobility and humility of your origins?

Hey, fellow magician, fellow witch, have you found your center of power and the discipline to work on your philosopher's stone, or are you still busy and distracted, imposing your reality on others?

Hey, master of the occult sciences, have you guided others on their spiritual path, or are they still bound to you by their pride and your vanity, believing that only you possess the absolute truth?

No, seriously, my enlightened friend, have you finally understood that your reality and your truth, as a symbol of wisdom, are both the same as and different from the reality and truth of others?

Because let's understand that we don't think the same way as others, nor do we arrive at the same point, since we haven't started from the same place. And the beginning of wisdom lies in silence and observation, in teaching and reflection, in meditating and always acting with awareness and responsibility.

So, are we still playing at esotericism, or are we starting to live it now?

Whether you follow a left path or a right path doesn't exempt you from reality or society, and what you do or don't do won't eventually affect your world and your society. Understand this once and for all.

The spiritual work for those on either of these two paths is twofold, because they not only have to look out for themselves, but also for others, whether it be their partner, their apprentice, a friend who learns from them without their knowledge, or their family.

You are always being observed. Whether it's the abyss, God, Lucifer, consciousness, the universe, other people, your inner being, or your divinity, someone is always watching you. How do you respond to what you've experienced and learned?

Remember, you are what you think and do!

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Psychogenealogy

Psychogenealogy is a language of mathematical precision, a system of repetitions with dates, illnesses, deaths, situations, and names: neurological maps that are traversed and transmitted from generation to generation. We carry the unresolved conflicts of our family tree, and this manifests in us as experiences of suffering, illness, and ultimately, prevents us from fulfilling our dreams.

Often, unconsciously, we seek to connect with our ancestors, unknowingly following in their footsteps. Therefore, by knowing our ancestors, we acquire a more individual identity by ceasing to repeat unconscious patterns.

Transgenerational information is the information that the biological unconscious stores and that the family clan transmits from generation to generation so that a conflict can be

resolved in later generations. It is everything related to family memories. The common denominator is: what are we going to hide within the clan? The objective of transgenerational analysis is to bring the family history into our consciousness, to understand it, and to understand the role we are (unconsciously) invited to play throughout our lives. In this way, we are also invited to resolve situations that have been excluded from family consciousness.

The emotional and behavioral conditioning experienced and ingrained by our ancestors, our lineage, in our personal unconscious, determines our stance toward life, toward the situations we encounter daily, and leads our actions to repeat patterns, sometimes painful ones, in different personal areas. The psychogenealogical analysis of one's own family tree reveals the original causes that triggered these patterns. Its vision and understanding are healing in themselves, but we must take a further step toward overcoming and reprogramming those hurtful routines that prevent us from living the life we want to live fully and consciously.

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[Magick](#)

Magick, in the context of Aleister Crowley's Thelema, is a term used to denote and differentiate occult from performance magic and is defined as 'the science and art of bringing about change in conformity with the will,' including 'mundane' acts of will and ritual magic. Crowley wrote that "it is theoretically possible to bring about in any object any change of which that object is by nature capable." John Symonds and Kenneth Grant attribute a deeper occult significance to this distinction.

Crowley viewed magic as the essential method for a person to achieve true self-understanding and act in accordance with their true will, which he saw as the reconciliation "between free will and destiny." Crowley describes this process in his *Magick*.

One must discover for oneself, and be absolutely certain beyond any doubt, who one is, what one is, and why one is. Having thus become aware of the proper course to follow, the next step is to understand the necessary conditions for following it. After that, one must eliminate from oneself everything foreign or hostile to success and develop those parts of oneself that are especially necessary for controlling the aforementioned conditions.

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[Fatty Liver](#)

Fatty liver

Other names: Fatty liver disease, Hepatic steatosis, Adipose liver

What is fatty liver disease?

The liver is the largest organ inside the body. It helps digest food, store energy, and remove toxins. Fatty liver disease is a condition in which fat accumulates in the liver. There are two main types:

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease

Alcoholic fatty liver disease, also called alcoholic hepatic steatosis

What is non-alcoholic fatty liver disease?

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease is a type of fatty liver that is not related to alcohol consumption. There are two types:

Simple fatty liver: There is fat in the liver, but little or no inflammation or damage to the liver cells. In general, simple fatty liver is not serious enough to cause liver damage or complications.

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD): This condition involves inflammation and damage to liver cells, along with fat accumulation. The inflammation and damage to liver cells can lead to fibrosis, or scarring of the liver. NAFLD can cause cirrhosis or liver cancer.

What is alcoholic fatty liver disease?

As its name suggests, alcoholic fatty liver disease is caused by heavy alcohol consumption. Your liver breaks down most of the alcohol you drink so it can be eliminated from your body, but the breakdown process can produce harmful substances. These substances can damage liver cells, cause inflammation, and weaken your body's natural defenses. The more alcohol you drink, the more damage you do to your liver. Alcoholic fatty liver disease is the earliest stage of alcoholic liver disease (or alcoholic hepatopathy). The next stages are alcoholic hepatitis and cirrhosis.

Who is at risk of developing fatty liver disease?

The cause of fatty liver disease is unknown. Researchers do know that it is more common in people who:

They have type 2 diabetes and prediabetes

She is obese.

They are middle-aged or older (although children can also suffer from it)

They are Hispanic, followed by non-Hispanic whites. It is less common among African Americans.

They have high levels of lipids (fats) in their blood, such as cholesterol and triglycerides.

They have high blood pressure.

They take certain medications, such as corticosteroids and some cancer drugs.

They have certain metabolic disorders, including metabolic syndrome.

They lose weight very quickly

They have certain infections such as hepatitis C

They have been exposed to some toxins

Fatty liver disease affects about 25 percent of the world's population. Just as rates of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and high cholesterol are rising in the U.S., so is the rate of fatty liver disease. It is the most common chronic liver disorder in the U.S.

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[The Fake Alien Invasion](#)

William Cooper and his legacy reveal that a fake alien invasion has been planned for

some time, with the purpose of helping to create a World Government. For a long time now, cinemas around the world have been showing us films about alien invasions or extraterrestrial contact. This UFO propaganda that we see on TV and in cinemas is the largest psychological and mind control operation carried out with precision and timing. The important question is: On what day will the fake alien invasion take place?

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Wells, Herbert George

Is there any proof that world events are following a script? The question has intrigued me because many people with inside knowledge have told me they've been attending meetings where the script for the future was written—200-year, 40-year, 20-year, 10-year, and 5-year plans. H.G. Wells's futuristic predictions demonstrate that, indeed, it's much more real than the average person could imagine.

Written in 1913, Wells's "The World Set Free" predicted the use of atomic bombs and the effect of nuclear war long before scientists even considered the possibility. He also predicted the breakdown in 1933, when the details of the nuclear chain reaction were discovered. In other books, Wells said that a New World Order would emerge so that an elite could control air and sea routes, as well as energy production, which they have already done. Another incredible visionary idea was the concept of air superiority. Whoever consistently gains control of the air will win the ground battle. This has been proven since World War I, but it wasn't realized when H.G. Wells conceived it, and it has taken many years for people to accept the idea.

H.G. Wells not only predicted modern warfare, the bombing of London, atomic bombs, the League of Nations, stealth fighters over Iraq, spaceflight, and countless other details of the future long before their eventual occurrence, he not only outlined in detail how a New World Order could be created, but he also played a role in bringing about the events that led to it.

He was a key figure in the creation of the League of Nations. When the Russian Revolution occurred, H.G. Wells (who was known simply as H.G.) went to Russia to exchange ideas with Lenin on how to follow up the Revolution to create a New World Order. They did not reach an agreement and parted ways. (The disagreement arose over HG's view that elite families, through business and technology, could create the New World Order. Lenin wanted to socialize things directly through a strong government.)

Much later, in 1934, HG personally visited Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the US and Stalin in Moscow. (Incidentally, all three were Freemasons.) After visiting Franklin Delano Roosevelt, HG declared that "the United States... [was] the most effective instrument for transmitting the arrival of the New World Order."

He felt that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was incorporating conspiratorial ideas to bring about the New World Order that HG had been advocating; an example of this was Roosevelt's "brains," technocratic extractors like Felix Frankfurter and Raymond Moley, who shaped Franklin Delano Roosevelt's policies.

After his meeting with Stalin, he described him as, "I have never met a more sincere, fair, and honest man... and not at all secretive or sinister... everyone trusts him." Over the years, he advocated for the UK to assist the USSR. Readers may note from this that the US, the USSR, and the UK have all been oriented toward the same goal, but taking different paths. Overall, HG was a guru of his generation, and after his death, a society in his name continued to promote his views.

While he worked online with countless people around the world directly promoting his views (which, obviously, aligned with the "Plan"), his books played a more subtle but important role. The reader will have observed the following about human nature... the first time it encounters something true but strange, the mind dismisses it as ridiculously crazy. The second time it hears it, it does nothing but dismiss it, and often the third time the truth confronts the person, saying, "I already knew that," as if the matter were self-evident.

Now look at the titles of his books, "Anticipation" and "Things to Come," and the way they were written. It's clear he psychologically conditioned the public to accept the stages of the New World Order as self-evident. He was a master at this. And, in fact, when I listen to the elite today, I hear echoes of H.G. Wells's ideas. For example, David Rockefeller at the 1991 Bilderberg meeting said, "...the world is now more sophisticated and prepared to march toward a World Government that will never again know war, but only peace and prosperity for all humanity."

Contrary to the assumptions of many readers of Aldous Huxley, Orson Welles, and H.G. Wells, these authors were not opposed to prophetic views of a world dictatorship. H.G. Wells firmly believed in racial eugenics to kill inferior races and useless consumers. He believed the state should educate people and control their minds in service to the state. He believed in social engineering. He opposed allowing Christians to teach their children about God and religious tolerance.

If you were an Illuminati, like the late Masonic prophet Manly P. Hall, who was a Grand Master in both the Illuminati and Freemasonry, you would understand the esoteric reference HG made in "A Modern Utopia," p. 67, where the New World Order's Dictatorship of the Air would be "Bacon's vision of the House of Solomon."

This statement only serves to highlight H.G.'s connections to the Illuminati's hidden plans. It shows that H.G. was an insider with knowledge of these plans. Of course, along with this inner knowledge, H.G. possessed intense intellectual curiosity, a fully functioning mind, great willpower, and a disdain for the common man and the Christian God. He revealed in "The Invisible King" (1917) that his deity was "the personification of... his five-year plan."

Reading the script

, is Wells merely making a prediction, or was he helping to shape and create a New World Order? There is no doubt that he was a major player in its creation. His ideas have been used as a guide; one could even argue that his ideas are copied from a master plan that remains hidden from view. The powers that have been deliberately manipulating the crime rate are in line with H.G.'s prediction that a police state would grow in response to the increasing threat of crime. The war on terror unfolds accordingly. Obviously, H.G. Wells's writings were a plan of creation and not simply the musings of a curious and intelligent man.

Born in 1866, Wells wrote a series of books explaining how the arrival of the New World Order would occur. In 1895, he published "The Time Machine" and continued writing and publishing until 1945, with works such as "The Turning Happy," which references futuristic dreams he had, such as walking with Jesus, where in his recurring dreams he was a disappointment to humanity due to his stupidity and indifference.

One of Wells's "open conspiracy" concepts was that many people in the world would openly contribute to the creation of the New World Order. This parallels another occult prophet, Alice Bailey, and her ideas in "The Externalization of the Hierarchy," where she predicts that things done in secret in the occult world will be integrated to bring about the New World Order.

For those familiar with how the Illuminati have created groups like the CFR and the TLC, it will be noted that HG was associated with the RIIA (Royal Institute of International Affairs), which was the British equivalent of the CFR. The first president of the RIIA was Waldorf Astor. As I pointed out in my book "Be Wise as the Serpents," these organizations also include some individual members who are not Illuminati, so membership cannot be equated with being a member of a high secret society, but it does place a person in the middle of what they are doing.

Edith Star Miller, in "Occult Theocracy" (posthumously published in 1933), does a good job of linking the many organizations that the hierarchical race uses to carry out its agenda; the Fabian Society was one of them. H.G. was an active member of the Fabian Society, but his views were controversial with most of its members, which again demonstrates his activity and participation in the Plan.

The Webbs, leaders of the Fabian Society, also under the direction of Lord Robert Cecil (Head of Intelligence), organized the Cliveden Set and a group called The Coefficients. The Coefficients later became the Round Table. H.G. was part of The Coefficients, which included figures such as Sir Edward Grey, Bertrand Russell, and Cecil's cousin, Lord Arthur Balfour. Incidentally, these are names that appear in my book "Bloodlines of the Illuminati" (1995).

Son of a servant who served the elite.

Now, it must be taken into account that HG was born to a servant—a servant of the British elite—and this is where he rubbed shoulders with the aristocratic Illuminati elite. We must also take into account that HG despised the lower classes and promoted the idea that large elite corporations would lead us toward the New World Order, along with technology and the technocrats who control it.

HG's ideas about the power of technology and technocrats to create a New World Order spawned an entire movement in that direction. It is beyond the scope of this short article to go into that, but the use of technology, especially in the ways described by Wells, has been achieved. I knew back in 1991, when I was the first to identify HG as a Freemason, that this might lead to controversy, since Masonic Lodges do not publicly acknowledge one of their members.

There is a certain set of members whose membership must remain completely secret. I based my assertion that he was a Freemason on some earlier issues of the Scottish Rite New Age magazine, which I was fortunate enough to purchase and which date back to almost World War I. These magazines treated him as the members did, referring to him as a “Masonic prophet.” On the other hand, HG makes references to Freemasonry in his books/films and uses Masonic imagery and symbols.

Particularly noteworthy is a reference in his short story “The Inexperienced Ghost” to the Masonic Research Lodge, Quatuor Coronados Lodge 2076. His character says: “Now Sanderson is a Mason, a member of the Lodge of the Four Kings, who is so capably engaged in the study and elucidation of all the mysteries of Freemasonry, past and present.” (The Complete Short Stories of H.G. Wells, pp. 909-910). H.G. Wells had influence with Masons worldwide because of this.

The occult symbol of the winged globe, a symbol frequently used by the Mason Charles Taze Russell (founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Watchtower Society), would become the symbol of the New World Order in the book/film “The Shape of Things to Come.” I recommend reading my books, “Be Wise As The Serpents” (available in a pirated version online) and “The Watchtower and the Masons.” – 1990) to explore all the numerous links between all these things. Also noteworthy is H.G.'s close relationship with the Huxleys, who were Freemasons. Freemason T.H. Huxley (a Fellow of the Royal Society at 26), Wells's mentor, emphasized the idea of a scientific dictatorship, which H.G. was able to promote to the extent that it became a popular movement.

H.G. Wells had a self-belief and vitality that made his ideas appealing. He was very skilled with the pen, but a poor speaker. He had relationships with a steady stream of self-interested women, which emotionally scarred him in the short term. He valued friends, such as the internationally renowned author Joseph Conrad, but the women he conquered were simply sexual objects to him. Here the reader sees that there were inconsistencies in this example; his rhetoric about women's rights was one of his causes, but not a personal lifestyle. He had his big break in life when William Ernest Henley believed in his abilities and in 1895 helped launch his career as a science fiction writer. Two books that greatly influenced Wells as a young writer were Plato's

"Republic" and Jonathan Swift's satire "Gulliver's Travels."

Wells shows us that "decision-makers" are actually guided by futuristic plans. H.G. Wells was central to what the Illuminati were doing to create the developmental stages toward a World Government. That he believed in what he was doing is beyond doubt. His possible occult activities, if they took place, have been very well hidden. He was a practical intellectual whose writings have changed our world.

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HG Wells, Wikipedia, and the Google brain

While H.G. Wells has become popular with today's generations as a profoundly prophetic science fiction writer, he was known in his day as a very busy man bringing about the New World Order... literally.

A staunch advocate of globalization, Wells pushed a recurring theme of a global community and maintained a deep contempt for common humanity, an elitist trait typical of the eugenics he also championed.

Why was he so accurate with his predictions, whether regarding technology or social change? Could his membership in clubs and secret societies have had something to do with it?

Same old story, who are we kidding? Things don't just happen; they're planned. Well in advance.

By the time society fully awakens, it may be too late. Even though it has been happening for centuries, if not millennia, it's too much for most to bear. Cowards. Anyway, we're seeing it; anyone unwilling to face the truth is a coward.

Of course, there's hope for everyone—there always is. Now, discover your eternal self connected to the entire Universe. Therein lies the key to freedom.

But people have to decide to take it.

H.G. Wells

: Do you smell elitist arrogance?

Armchair engineers deciding your fate. Like that? They're still here!

The Plan Unfolds

. Here are some self-explanatory extracts from an excellent paper on Wells's World Brain theory.

In 1938, at the age of 72, H.G. Wells published his small book of essays and speeches entitled, *World Brain*, in both American and English editions.

At this point in his life, Wells was an internationally renowned literary figure. His books, fiction and nonfiction alike, were popular and widely translated. He had access to the leading statesmen of his day.

Wells was a utopian social reformer. He was intrigued by socialism and was involved for a time before World War I with Beatrice and Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw, and other members of the Fabian Society . After the war, he became increasingly and passionately devoted to the idea that a new kind of world order was needed.

In this respect, he witnessed the rise of fascism and the Russian communist state with a curious ambivalence.

As the scornful critic he was, especially of fascist dictators, he sometimes seemed to suggest that their totalitarian regimes represented stages in the evolution of the new kind of unified, single World State that he believed was an inevitable consequence.

And to address the coming generations of transhumanism and the global mind:

"...Wells spoke of the progressive emergence 'in the species *Homo sapiens*' of 'synthetic super-minds... in which individual consciousnesses tend to merge.'

These supra-individual organizations are cultures, churches, communities, states, classes, and creeds, and represent 'the accumulations of mentalities.'

Wells suggests that current trends seem to indicate that these are 'coalescing.'

They seem to be heading toward 'a final unification in a collective human organism, whose knowledge and memory will be all science and all history, which will synthesize the prevailing will to live and reproduce into a collective purpose of continuity and growth.' Want to

know where this monster Wells is going with all this?

In a later book, *The Shape of Things to Come* (*The Shape of Things to Come*), he explores the idea that these superhuman entities are the ones that will eventually coalesce into a single, cohesive whole. *Things to Come*), he portrayed the processes of

adaptation at work in human society as overcoming "the inherent aversion of the person to subordination and sacrifice."

To ensure the success of the new social order that is beginning to emerge in the 21st century, "man's life and interests have been socialized against their natural disposition."

This is described as subversive individualism. In the future, Wells believed that "the darker processes of selection" will be "accelerated and directed by eugenic effort," and man will become a new species (p. 426). I bet you didn't know all that.

File:Wikipedia-es-logo-black-on-white.png - Wikipedia ...

The World Encyclopedia Is Now

"[Wells] believed that his 'modern encyclopedism' constituted a 'scheme for the reorganization and reorientation of education and information throughout the world. Nothing less.'"

(Wells, 1938, p. 17)

"It would involve," he declared, "compiling facts and suggestions with the same insistence on scientific reality and the same exclusion of irrelevancies that has controlled the establishment of the world-conception that I have set before the reader." "Ibid.

Wikipedia and all its dubious roots are only part of this.

It is evident that this Wiki, sponsored by information globalists from the beginning, is definitely a domination agenda at work. Nobody trusts its information, yet you depend on it for quick definitions. The intelligent assimilation of information, all according to plan.

It is the World Encyclopedia on steroids as predicted/foreseen/instructed by Wells.

More profoundly, the information matrix that H.G. Wells foresaw is alive and well, all over the internet, securely and totally controlled by the NSA, every nefarious piece of information taking shape in the black heart of the world of black operations. Information giants like Google are part of it.

Everyone knows it. But it's not skin falling off your nose, it's just the way cold-hearted executors execute this master plan.

What is astonishing is reading it so specifically foreseen in the well-publicized words of

H.G. Wells ,

George Orwell,

Aldous Huxley

, George Bernard Shaw,

...and Other members of the Fabian Society are much further behind, when it becomes clear that the plan is long-term and carefully monitored.

Eugenics is the lifeblood of globalist elites.
In order to have their utopian society, the elites must clear the undergrowth—the undesirables, the impure, the most disadvantaged—as if they had nothing to do with their decisions.

The arrogant hypocrisy is indescribable, but suffice it to say that we need to identify these parasites for what they are and expose their nefarious compromises.

Wells and many others were part of bringing these machinations to fruition. What is astonishing when examining this evolution of the structure is the smoothness with which these parasites have been able to push this through, generation after generation.

That this stealthy, swift nature is so akin to the satanic foundations of the elite is undeniable.

It's Almost Over - Time to Boost Engagement.

The Truth cannot be overcome, despite all their long-term plans.

We've covered this many times: these sons of bitches are long-term planners, and motivated and empowered by we don't know what, but it's not good, and it's long-term.

And so what?

This part of their agenda is just another piece of the puzzle of their multifaceted oppression of humanity. History has been bastardized, nullified, and adulterated. In the US school system, eugenics or whatever H.G. Wells was preaching is never mentioned. It's typical.

You just have to learn from this. It's just touching on another aspect. Seeing the bigger picture is what this is all about.

Trust your instincts. Trust your heart. Be courageous in your convictions...

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“The first thing the Initiate learns, however, is that he knows almost nothing about himself. The personality is a mass of parental and social conditioning, shaped and reshaped by advertising, propaganda, and selective education. The first tasks for the student are to strip away the additions in order to finally reveal his own pristine core. This process of self-revelation is the first opening of the Eye of Leviathan, learning to see things—and particularly oneself—as they truly are. Even this first realization is difficult and time-consuming, a far harder task than most modern people—and certainly most occultists—are prepared to commit to. Add to this the fact that it is always a terrifying and disorienting experience that will irreversibly change the Initiate, and you really needn't be too surprised at why the Left-Hand Path is rejected and feared.”

—Michael Kelly

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["In this age of over specialization, with emphasis on chemistry, bacteriology, and](#)

mechanical and surgical research, we have lost sight of the over-all picture of man as a living being with lines of force working in fields of finer energies."

- Dr. Randolph Stone

Dr. Randolph Stone, DO, DC, ND (1890-1981), was an American Osteopath born in Austria. He created Polarity Therapy as a synthesis of western medicine and eastern wisdom traditions. In his fifty years of general medical practice in Chicago, he developed a deep understanding of the subtle principles underlying wellness and disease.

Beginning in 1948, Stone self-published a series of books and pamphlets to explain his ideas and methods. Unfortunately his writing style and information organization were not linear. Topics appear sprinkled throughout the whole of the work and no indexing was done. In addition, much of the text was presented in hand-lettered charts, thus making it inaccessible to optical character recognition software. All these factors have combined to make scholarly study of the whole of Dr. Stone's work difficult at best.

This project is intended to make Dr. Stone's Polarity Therapy more accessible by converting everything into a digital, searchable, and indexed format. The Associate Polarity Practitioner Class of 2010 at the Colorado School of Energy Studies laboriously transcribed all the hand-lettered charts as a gift to the worldwide Polarity Therapy community. Our hope is that holistic health scholars everywhere will benefit from full access to Dr. Stone's material.

Because of his background and the era in which he wrote, Dr. Stone used some European spellings and (now) out-dated phrases in his texts. In the spirit of preserving his original work, we have kept these spellings and phrases exactly as Dr. Stone first published them. But to make searches more intuitive for modern researchers, modern variations are included in brackets following the original text (e.g., "psoas magnus [psoas major]"). Call-out points and notes within illustrations are included either as lists next to the illustration or as notes at the bottom of each page, thus making their words searchable as well.

This project also included creating additional keywords and editorial notes for the transcribed charts, and offering numerous other supportive resources and tools. Its growth is ongoing and new features are being contemplated. To enable free access for users, this "Stone-ipedia" is supported by donations large and small, sponsorships, referrals and advertising. Please use the links provided if you feel moved to help this project grow and flourish by patronizing the vendors who are contributing, or contact us with any questions about funding.

If you have any difficulties with this site, or any ideas on how to improve it and make the information even more accessible, please feel free to contact us and let us know. Otherwise, happy searching!

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The charts below are viewable in their original form as well as their searchable, transcribed texts and images. To view the original chart, click on the thumbnail image found on the transcribed page.

Other resources will be made available as our work continues.

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Polarity Therapy Volume 2, "Enquiry Into the Gross Body"

Chart 1 Chart 2

Health Building

Complete text for Part 1 - Health Building

Complete text for Part 2 - Easy Stretching Postures for Vitality and Beauty

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Supplemental Essays and Advancements in Study

Doctor Stone wrote during the mid-20th century. Science and technology have

advanced considerably since then, as has our understanding of the human body and the myriad systems that work in and around us. Here you will find further information that applies our modern knowledge to Dr. Stone's writings and Polarity Therapy.

Autonomic Nervous System Terminology - by John Chitty

Differentiating between the different nervous systems in the human body, and disambiguation between how those terms were used in the 1950's versus how they are used today.

The Three Principles and Five Elements - by John Chitty

Disambiguation between "Fire" and "Water" as Principles or as Elements.

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Autonomic Nervous System Terminology - by John Chitty

While Dr. Stone deserves great respect for his ahead-of-his-time¹ identification of the Autonomic Nervous System as a central factor in health conditions, his terminology is often confusing for a modern reader. In his time, the terms "Vegetative" and "Sympathetic" were used for "Autonomic." The reasoning behind these terms was that the primary categorizations of the overall nervous system were between Voluntary and Involuntary action. The voluntary nerve groups operated for conscious volitional movements, while the involuntary nerve groups operated for actions that have little or no voluntary control, such as essential visceral functions. In an earlier era, the voluntary groups were considered "Antipathetic" in that a separate-from-body witness consciousness is the operator. The involuntary ("Autonomic") groups were considered "Sympathetic" because there is no apparent separate control consciousness, and "Vegetative" because they regulate more primitive functioning.

Within the involuntary category ("Sympathetic," "Vegetative," or "Autonomic" in Dr. Stone's era), further subdivision is recognized in three further distinct branches (of which only two were known to Dr. Stone - the third was identified anatomically and physiologically in 1995 by Stephen Porges, PhD). These three branches are known in modern times as "Parasympathetic," "Ortho-Sympathetic"² (or just "Sympathetic," today's common term which continues the confusion), and "Social." Porges has developed state-of-the-art understanding of these three in their actions and interactions, far beyond what was commonly known in Dr. Stone's time.

Sub-category	Main Action	Stress response	Phylogenic order	Anatomical components
Parasympathetic	Baseline metabolism	Freeze	Oldest	Vagus Nerve, Sacral Plexus
Ortho-Sympathetic (thoraco-lumbar)	Mobilization	Fight or Flight	Newer	Sympathetic chain
Social Bonding, Communication	Group behavior	Newest	Cranial nerves V, VII, IX, X, XI, Corticobulbar Tract	

Within DigitalDrStone, the editors attempt to give [in brackets]³ unified updated language interpreting what Dr. Stone meant when he used the various nervous system terms, based on modern understanding. It should be recognized that there is openness, indeed eagerness, for further scholarly debate about the correctness of these interpretations.

1 "...40 to 60 percent of all diseases have a psychosomatic origin..." Stone, Polarity Therapy, Vol. I, Book 2 Chart 44

2 This antique European term, rarely used, is suggested by embryology expert Jaap van der Wal, PhD, MD as a way to repair the multiple meaning terminology problem relating to the term "Sympathetic."

3 and footnotes

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[Polarity Therapy Volume 1, Book 2](#)

[Chart No. 44 - Special Sense Functions of the Brain and Their Representative
Locations on the Head.](#)

[These external areas can be influenced by manipulation to react through the brain as a
physiological stimuli.](#)

Fig. 1 belongs to the other chart of anatomical reflex areas in the head. It is left here on purpose, to show the connection between the mechanical aspect of molding bones and its reflexes to the body and effects thru [through] the brain, its convolutions and the cerebrospinal fluid. Figs. 2-3 and 4 give general areas for the expression of the finer quality actions of the soul which manifest as faculties thru [through] the mind and build their respective representative location of organs in the brain to express these mental qualities and impulses. No attempt is made here to teach phrenology, but merely bring about a link of understanding, that soul function has everything to do with body and mind function.

All psychiatry has its roots in the mind, which operates these faculties thru [through] representative brain areas. Since it is estimated that from 40 [forty] to 60 [sixty] percent of all diseases have a psychosomatic origin it would be well to give this aspect more attention. An intelligent entity lives in this body, and it is not a mere chemical-mechanical laboratory. Every reaction depends on the central action of this soul in the body and its fine ultra-sonic [ultrasonic] vibratory energy currents.

A physiological phase could be added to psychiatry by finding the weaker faculties and deficient organic representation and build them up by mental exercise like training for a vocation.

Illustration Keywords: (fig. 1) mammae [mammas, breasts], thorax, generatives, respiratory, abdomen, symphysis pubes [pubic symphysis], ilium, shoulders, back, arms, buttocks, sacrum, pelvis, thighs, legs, feet
(fig. 2) intellect, understanding, observation, benevolent emotions, neutral, sensibility and excitability, vital mobility, moral power, animal force and muscularity
(fig. 3) delicate, feeble and irregular, soft, tranquil, excited, excited and irritated, normal, strong and active, hard, forcible or violent
(fig. 4) spiritual senses, sensitive, vision, hearing, sense of muscular force, feeling
(fig. 6) observation, location, time, music, measurement, gravitation, color, system, numbers, eventuation, induction, human nature, benevelence [benevolence], adoration, firmness, self esteem, causation, urbanity, imitation, mirth, spirituality, hope, conscience, approbateness [approbateness], ideality, grandeur, caution, agriculture, construction, acquisition, secrecy, destruction, force, vibration, appetite, audition, vibration, application, friendship, habitation, mating, parental love, amateness, motivation

Book 2, Chart 43 ~ Book 2, Chart 45

Book 2, "Explanation of Chart No. 44"

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The Three Principles and Five Elements - by John Chitty
Dr. Stone's entire world-view is built on the concept of Three Principles and Five Elements. The Three Principles concept refers to Yang-Yin-Neutral (or Tao), being the continuous rhythmic circuit-flow of energy, from spirit to matter and back, that is the basis of all phenomena in the ancient Himalayan wisdom traditions as well as in modern physics. The Five Elements (Ether, Air, Fire, Water, Earth) concept refers to the stages of materialization, from subtle to dense and back, particularly in the context of the five chakras or energy transformers along the spine.

For whatever reasons, Dr. Stone was not consistent in his usage of these terms. There are places where this problem is very clear, and other places where there is some uncertainty.

To avoid this confusion, Dr. Stone's "Fiery Principle" is more commonly referred to as "Yang," his "Watery Principle" is referred to as "Yin," and his "Airy Principle" as "Neutral" or "Tao."

Within DigitalDrStone, the editors attempt to give [in brackets]¹ unified updated language interpreting what Dr. Stone meant when he used the terms "Principle" or "Element" based on modern understanding. It should be recognized that there is openness, indeed eagerness, for further scholarly debate about the correctness of these interpretations.

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Lori Olcott: email

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We would like to thank all the people who have donated their time, efforts and resources to this project. It wouldn't have been possible without the many hands that made light this work. Know that your efforts have enriched the fields of Polarity Therapy and Human Energy Studies around the world. Thank you. Danke. Namaste.

John Chitty - for asking, "How can we make this more accessible?" and providing the initial resources to make it happen

Lori Olcott - for asking, "Why don't we do it?" and taking on the organizational, design and formatting tasks

David Harel - for asking, "What else do you need?" and offering the technical support that brought this information to you today

And to the following people - for asking, "Can we help too?" and doing the transcriptions and proof-reading, bringing Dr. Stone's work to the web:

John Chitty Matt Goodhart David Harel Debra Kloor

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Lynn Thoré Cindy Williams

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Dr. Stone's "Bumper Sticker" Quotes

Sometimes a sentence or turn of phrase in Dr. Stone's work is so full of philosophy and

food for thought, sums up a concept so concisely, or so inspires a whole new way of seeing something, that it makes you say, "That would make a great bumper sticker!"

If you have a bumper sticker moment while reading these charts, let us know! Here are some of the ones submitted thus far. Who knows, one of your favorites may become a real bumper sticker.

Service without love is work. - Dr. Randolph Stone

God geometrizes. - Vol. 1, Book 1, Pg. 22; Vol. 1, Book 2, Chart 11; Vol. 1, Book 3, Pg. 52; Vol. 2, Book 4, Pg. 51

Running water clears itself. - Vol. 1, Book 1, Pg. 60; Vol. 1, Book 1, Pg. 85

Space and grace are Nature's ace. - Vol. 1, Book 1, Pg. 69

The senses open the way, and the motor impulses obey - Vol. 1, Book 1, Pg. 70

Merely telling the patient to relax is useless. - Vol. 1, Book 1, Pg. 87

Our mind conditions our experience. - Vol. 1, Book 1, Pg. 91

Science has no measure for life. - Vol. 1, Book 2, Pg. 1

The whole constitution of man must be taken into consideration, not merely the treating of the body as a chemical or mechanical machine. - Vol. 1, Book 2, Pg. 2

Only practice conquers and accomplishes. - Vol. 1, Book 2, Chart 63

Daily practice does it. - Vol. 1, Book 2, Chart 64

That which serves best, is best. - Vol. 1, Book 3, Pg. 2

Obstacles are God's design ~ To make a man with a spine. - Vol. 1, Book 3, Pg. 30

It is best for man to work with Nature and to be in tune with Nature and with God instead of giving in to his own desires to control anything besides himself. - Vol. 1, Book 3 Appendix, Pg. 114

Life flows from above downward, and structure supports function from below upward. - Vol. 2, Book 4, Pg. 3

Even as the tiny atom is a universe in itself, so is man. - Vol. 2, Book 4, Pg. 44

Faith coupled with effort always gets results. - Vol. 2, Book 4, Pg. 48

It appears that all our effort has been spent on research in matter, and none on Life itself. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 3

An injury to physical tissue repairs with time and rest, while mental injuries require a new vision and viewpoint. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 23

Conscious growth only comes through whole-hearted attention to an ideal or objective. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 27

The true doctor should know Life, feel it and understand its pattern of flow, ... the same as he knows his anatomy. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 27

Energy flow is the primary factor. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 27

We have utterly lost our way in matter and over-valued it. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 27-28

Causes are primary factors to correct. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 30

The neck is a cross road of the main vital currents, downward and upward. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 52

It is not by strength nor by might, but by skill that we succeed. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 59

It is a process of floating with the Universal Currents on the Waters of Life. Our little boat cannot help but float to the other shore if Truth and Service are steering it to its goal. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 72

May this work reach the seekers who are looking for a deeper perspective of a common denominator in the healing art, to push it along in keeping with all the atomic discoveries of today. The health and well-being of the people should not be neglected. It should really be the first concern of the scientists, doctors and educators. Without health and happiness, all our modern conveniences are of little comfort to us. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 77

All chronic conditions must become acute by increased energy and circulation before restoration of normal tissue is possible. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 78

What the doctor's mind cannot conceive, that, he cannot relieve. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 87

Man endures - Nature cures. - Vol. 2, Book 5, Pg. 97

Energy is the real substance behind the appearance of matter and forms. - Vol. 2, Book 6, Pg. 4

Life exists as the result of tension between two extremes - male and female - positive and negative - yang and yin - pingala and ida - right and left breath - qualitative and

quantitative. - Vol. 2, Book 6, Pg. 4

What the needles can do, the hands can do better. - Vol. 2, Book 6, Pg. 6

Life itself is a paradox, which comforts while it mocks. - Vol. 2, Book 6, Pg. 19

If we really want health, we must be willing to work for it. - Health Building, Pg. 7 and Pg. 16

Those who are destined to look for true health will find it. - Health Building, Pg. 9

We are what we eat and drink ~ What we feel and what we think. - Health Building, Pg. 15

We will become that which we contemplate. - Health Building, Pg. 16

We cannot think negative thoughts and reap positive results. - Health Building, Pg. 16

Health is not merely of the body, it is one in all. - Health Building, Pg. 17

Be an artist and an architect of your own house, your temple, your body and your mind. - Health Building, Pg. 18

Creation has an outward purpose for the body and an inward purpose for the soul. - Health Building, Pg. 21

Clear thinkers try to find the causes, while the average look for escapes from effects. - Health Building, Pg. 27

Don't treat disease; treat the individual. - Health Building, Pg. 47

Is it not possible for man to keep well by doing a few simple things daily and living less strenuously? The answer is yes. - Health Building, Pg. 101

If external cleanliness is said to be next to Godliness, what could real internal cleanliness accomplish? - Health Building, Pg. 102

There must be pioneers for every new idea, or our world would stagnate and become utterly uninteresting. - Health Building, Pg. 103

We live either by an inner faith or are guided by outer circumstances. Which is our path and on what do we depend as our guiding star? - Health Building, Pg. 110

The greatest mystery in the universe is man himself. - Health Building, Pg. 113

Never force anything, physically or mentally. - Health Building, Pg. 119

Nature's way is gentle growth. - Health Building, Pg. 123

Could not all the grown-ups in this "Kindergarten of Life" adopt the same procedure of natural, soulful living? - Health Building, Pg. 142

Ninety per cent of pain is emotional. - Health Building, Pg. 144

Health is movement. Disease is fixation.

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Lexicon

Bicausal

In a nutshell: the chain of causation goes both upwards (from matter to consciousness) and downwards (from consciousness to matter).

Definition: We live in a bi-causal UNUM in which information flows down and up, in an economy of scale. Source learns from us as equally as we experience the downward causation of "thought" that we experience as physicality and myriads of experiences.

Biomind

In a nutshell: body and mind as an integrated whole

Definition: "The living matrix of a human COBE is composed of all living tissue of the body-mind's hosting what can best be described as biomind. This interaction/interfaces complex exhibits properties that demonstrate interconnectedness by and through their very nature to hook up to all living entities, and oscillate in harmonic resonance with the T-boundary" (Bordon et al, Essay One- Idiomaterial Physics- a Life Physics in a Bicausal Universe). A biomind, COBE indexed to a planetary sphere like Earth, are in resonance with the thought-boundary.

COBE - Complex Oscillating Biological Entity

In a nutshell: the COBE is a flowing, glowing, massless, purely energetic life form entangled with an information storage matrix otherwise called the human body-mind. This is a less obscure way of saying that the human entity is a spiritual being living inside a physical body.

Definition: Referring to us, human beings and others who fall under the category. We are not just simply flesh and blood beings composed of "matter." All of us, cells, body, mind, information cloud sing and dance to hums of life itself. All life on earth is bioelectronic oscillating entities in a bioelectronic medium (earth).

"A living organism is quite literally organized tissue of many kinds, with heterogeneous, quite dynamic structures over multiple space/time domains. No cell is static, and all cells have their characteristic anatomies and dynamics. These cells also have mechanical properties and electrical potentials that respond to environmental influences and changes." (Bordon et al, Biogeosystemics 1)

Enteric brain/4th brain

In a nutshell: brain in the ventral area connecting us to our intuition

Definition: We have three cranial brains, the reptilian, mammalian and cortical "brains" as one central nervous system. Then we have a fourth system of nerves, ganglia, and complex nervous system that runs from the gonads up to the upper chest, covering the viscera or ventral area. This is the enteric brain. This is the part of you that processes

what we call “intuition” and much more. It is the part of you that just “knows,” but often gets lost in the chatter and flawed observations and deductions of the conscious mind. This brain also uses a languaging system completely different from that used by the cortical brain. The latter is linear, intellectual and verbal in essence. The enteric brain uses a completely different languaging system - one which is nonverbal, polysensorial, drawing information from information clouds and information cumuli that are can be accessed by linear and nonlinear grasping (used here as the acquisition of information by “closure on the meaning” as knowingness). The enteric brain is also not able to function by grasping information in nonlocal modality as well; in other words, it can grasp information emanating from the other side of Planet Earth, from the edge of the galaxy, the edge of the universe, and from relative locations as the T-boundary.

Idiomaterial

In a nutshell: referring to the nature of reality as being both thought and mater

Definition: Referring to the condition of in which all levels of manifestation of the UNUM exist, being both thought and matter simultaneously. All of what we call physical reality is a result of prime-causal “thought,” which makes it inherently also thought in the narrow sense of the word’s meaning.

LEOM (Light Encoding of an Object Matrix)

In a nutshell: encoding an object from the vacuum into physicality

Definition: An organismic (full body) condition usually referred to as “optimal biogenetic functioning” that may allow a human COBE to manifest the capacity to consciously initiate a bicausal process that involves the resonant harmonic interaction between templates of an object (the subquantum template of the potential object) and the electromagnetic/electrostatic template of the physical object in 4-space/time). Internally, in the COBE, the process is holomorphic and holonomic. Psychophysiologies are entirely polysensorial and the manifest production of these psychophysiologies are subject to the mastery of the use of these psychophysiologies in algorithmic fashion, such that once the holomorphic and holonomic experiences are mastered as algorithms, they may be used repetitively. In this process, a human operator’s RNA/DNA complex is the connecting element between the interfacing of the templates and the cells of the body become transducers of energy from one template to the other (the subquantum template providing sonoelectrogravitic energy and the 4-space/time template transducing the sonoelectrogravitic (SEG) energy into biologically suited electromagnetic (EM), electrostatic (ES) and sonoluminescent (SL) energies. Transduction occurs at the cellular level, and it is the biogenetically viable human cells which translates SEG energy into protomatter and then coherent matter, according to the EM template of the object desired. It is the human operator’s capacity to generate and focus on a visual representation of the desired object that coalesces protomatter into matter with a final adrenorgasmic burst.

MPO (Manifest Product Observership)

In a nutshell: “creating your reality”

Definition: This phrase refers to an event spectrum which is continuous and dynamic and does not stop until a cause (e.g., a COBE biomind) ceases to exist in 4-space/time. There are two ways to understand this event spectrum. One is as a continuous event spectrum initiated by the birth of a COBE biomind on a place and timeline in the world. This birth establishes the location of the COBE's lightcone (as a macroquantum object) and a timeline on which it moves in the world. The other is as an event spectrum complex – dynamic and constantly changing in time and space. The instant the superposing of information cloud on body form, indexing to worldline and a 4-space/time holographic medium is complete. This indexing makes a COBE dependent on time- and space-regimes for all of its biological processes in the holographic medium, interacting with this medium as a broad spectrum of biological-to-medium interfaces. This interaction is actually symbiotic, in that status of one depends on the status of the other, and vice versa. The exercise of observership (observation plus medium and biological-to-medium interfaces) results in the continuous manifest production of holonomic experience in the COBE biomind. It is this holonomic experience which the COBE's mind interprets as its world reality. Over time and within the COBE's timeline, the automatized act of observation and participation stabilizes a spectrum of experiences as world and personal "reality," which then the COBE biomind learns to sustain experiences of this by way of internal psychophysiology that act more or less as auto-pilot in the life of the COBE as its "reality."

Meissner field

In a nutshell: aura

Definition: low-level photonic field that comes off the cellular surfaces at 90 degree angles, which is much like an organ. It stores information as much as it processes information, and it is not restricted to our notion of linear 4-space time.

Overunity State

In a nutshell: biological body filled up to maximum energy capacity

Definition: Also known as the Serpa condition. It is when the operator (a person) reaches their maximum biological threshold of electrical capacitance, is in a state of relaxation, stabilized mental state, and Meissner field expands outward. Meissner field can also contract inward when second harmonic "extends" away from body perpendicular at 90 degree angle orthogonally from the body. In other terminology this can be likened to an OBE (Out of Body Experience).

SBEG (Sonobioelectrogravitic)

In a nutshell: drawing energy from the vacuum

Definition: Note the combination of words. The energy has elements of sound, bioelectricity and gravity. SBEG moves fluidly through, cytoskeletal system and ground

substance matrix, both building blocks to larger structures like connective tissue (which is optimum for SBEG migration). "What is known as Kundalini Shakti is a circuit of sonobioelectrogravitic energy organismically drawn from the earth and from the local space-time vacuum-plenum of the body." (Bordon, Something from Nothing).

T-boundary (thought boundary)

In a nutshell: Source

Definition: The known edge of the universe, a fractal, fuzzy boundary that separates us- all that is thought from what the ancients called the "Ineffable silence" or as Kaballah knows it as the "Limitless" or Ein Sof. We could call the T-boundary as the Source of this multiverse.

UNUM

In a nutshell: Universe in its totality, unclosing matter, energy and consciousness

Definition: Life Physics term for all the idiomaterial levels of manifestation, including the universe as we know it as well as the ratios of space and time that make up the multiverses (also known as superdomains). "The multiverse is intelligence itself and is called the Unum, because it is seamless and, as it is, completely interconnected" (Bordon et al, Essay One- Idiomaterial Physics- a Life Physics in a Bicausal Universe)

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The Rosicrucian Fellowship publishes and sells books on Esoteric Christianity and Philosophy, Spiritual Astrology and Bible Interpretation. Max Heindel, an Initiate of the Rosicrucian Order, founded The Rosicrucian Fellowship and wrote his many books based on firsthand knowledge of occult facts.

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The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception

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Part I is a treatise on the Visible and the Invisible Worlds, Man and the Method of Evolution, Rebirth and the Law of Cause and Effect.

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The Psionic Handbook - Tweaking the Mystic and adding homebrewed psionic-themed content, including new disciplines, talents, psionic class options, feats, and more!
Hello r/UearthedArcana. Some of you may remember my attempt to continue the previous draft of the mystic about a year ago. I took a break from working on it and kind of just assumed there wasn't much interest in it, until I saw a few posts talking about my version of the mystic yesterday. Whoops.

Anyway, since the mystic has been updated, I wanted to take a go at it again, as we now have a better idea of what the final version of the class will be like. Keep in mind that this is a very rough draft right now. As always, constructive criticism and feedback are very much appreciated.

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[Changes \(Version 0.8\)](#)

Mystical Recovery. No longer requires a bonus action, but only occurs when spending psi points on a discipline of your order, and only once per turn. Note: A common complaint for the latest version of the mystic is that it's too easy to cherrypick disciplines

from other orders. This change adds incentive to focus on disciplines from your order's list, without restricting the player's choice completely. While it does free up the mystic's bonus actions slightly, my hope is that restricting it to once per turn and only on your order's disciplines will compensate.

Soul Knife. No longer requires a bonus action to manifest or dismiss. May take the form of any melee weapon, but the form has no effect on how much damage is dealt by the soul knife. Added the ability to transform a magic weapon to your soul knife, akin to the warlock's blade pact weapon. Note: I felt that costing the soul knife their bonus action to "draw" and "sheathe" their weapon was a bit much. I opened up the option to form the soul knife into other weapons for flavor, because the fantasy of having an energy greatsword appeals to me, personally.

Phantom Knife. Removed. Notes: Phantom Knife seems too much like "at level 14, you only miss if you roll a 1" and generally feels like a boring feature in spite of its uniqueness.

Hone the Blade. Added clarification that Hone the Blade requires no action.

Bladewind. Added in place of Phantom Knife. Functions identically to the hunter ranger's Whirlwind Attack.

Order Disciplines. Added Order of the Soul Knife disciplines, to support the change to Mystical Recovery and provide thematic discipline options.

Bestial Form. Bestial Claws is now a "melee discipline attack", which uses your discipline attack modifier for its attack roll. Notes: The Sage Advice response about Bestial Claws seems to imply that it uses your strength for the attack roll, which seems fairly underpowered for a class that has no incentive to raise strength.

Brute Force. The knock back power now uses a bonus action instead of a reaction.

New disciplines. Added several new disciplines: Alacrity, Displacement, Disruptive Strikes, Elemental Weapon, Force Bulwark, Mastery of the Void, Mental Veil, Metapsionics, Predation, Shape Matter, Spectral Throw, Will of Blades, Wrathful Guardian

New talents. Added several new talents: Distract, Crystal Burst, Hidden Blade, Unearthly Terror, Ballistic Attack

Psionic class archetypes. Added Psychic Warrior for fighter and Lurk for rogue. Notes: These are basically just psionic ripoffs of the Eldritch Knight and Arcane Trickster, intended to be placeholders until I or someone else can come up with something more interesting.

Customization options. Added rules for multiclassing with the mystic class. Also added

psionic-themed feats.

Thoughts

Possibly reduce the number of skill proficiencies granted by Order of the Awakened, Nomad, and Wu Jen. Mystics have a lot of versatility in terms of skill proficiencies, which may step on the toes of rogues and bards too much.

I considered lowering the damage of the Psychic Assault discipline's Psionic Blast from 1d8 per psi point to 1d6 as a kneejerk reaction, but have decided against it for now. Magic Missile sets precedent for dealing damage with no save or attack roll required. Comparing Psionic Blast and Magic Missile, using psi points equivalent to the spell slots used by Magic Missile, leaving Psionic Blast as in its current state falls very close to Magic Missile's damage. While it does pull ahead of Magic Missile, there are several creatures that are immune to psychic damage altogether, while Magic Missile doesn't suffer from any creatures being immune to force damage.

Psi Points	1d8 Psionic Blast	1d6 Psionic Blast	Magic Missile	Spell Level
2	2d8 (9)	2d6 (7)	1d4+1 x3 (10.5)	1
3	3d8 (13.5)	3d6 (10.5)	1d4+1 x4 (14)	2
5	5d8 (22.5)	5d6 (17.5)	1d4+1 x5 (17.5)	3
6	6d8 (27)	6d6 (21)	1d4+1 x6 (21)	4
7	7d8 (31.5)	7d6 (24.5)	1d4+1 x7 (24.5)	5

Is The Soul Knife feature Hone the Blade too strong at a +4 bonus?

Perhaps some of the many Intelligence and Charisma saves within the discipline powers should be changed to Wisdom, as many monsters have low Intelligence.

I dislike the Psionic Mastery feature, and wish WotC would have gone with something that increases your Psi Limit a limited number of times per day, as I had done. As it stands now, your Psi Limit never exceeds 7, effectively capping you at effects on par with 5th level spells. This limits how powerful discipline effects can be, and makes a lot of unique, high-level effects impossible to incorporate.

I've noticed a lot of comments along the lines of "this homebrew is better than the official thing" and requests to update my previous take on the mystic, but I have to admit that I'd prefer to tweak the official version into something more enjoyable than to scrap it.

To-do

Full balance pass over all disciplines.

Re-make psionic monsters and NPCs from the previous draft.

Add psionic equivalents of magic items.

Create more interesting archetypes for fighter and rogue.

Create a psionic archetype for monks.

Add more things to the to-do list.

3/16/17 Update (Version 0.8.1)

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Changes

Minor formatting adjustments.

Awakened and Wu Jen mystics now gain only one additional skill proficiency, and gain expertise in one skill they're proficient in. Nomad retains its flexible proficiency, but only gains one now. Note: I wanted to reduce the amount of "mystics can do too much!" feeling that came with being proficient in 4 skills, on top of psychic focus.

Psionic Mastery. Re-wrote the feature to (hopefully) be more clear, and provide the same end result as the official version.

Psi Points. The mystic now gains additional psi points at level 11, 13, 15, and 17.

Astral Manipulation. Added a new Nomad discipline, with effects related to the Astral Plane. Note: I'm very skeptical about Psionic Astral Projection. I would like to include some way to give mystics a form of astral projection, but there's already a 9th level spell for that.

Note on Psionic Mastery and Psi Point changes: I've seen a large amount of complaints about how badly worded Psionic Mastery is, so I wanted to address that first and foremost. The "spirit" of Psionic Mastery seems to be allowing the mystic to combine multiple concentration effects together in lieu of more powerful discipline effects to compete with 6th+ level spells. The official version requires an action to gain the "special psi points", which will most likely just result in mystics dumping their uses of Psionic Mastery at the start of the day to be used later. My rewrite attempts to remove that annoying type of gameplay by just granting extra points in line with what Psionic Mastery granted through its uses.

Hone the Blade. Added some wording to prevent Hone the Blade's bonus to attack and damage rolls from stacking with similar effects.

Crystalline Manifestations. Added a new Wu Jen discipline.

Destructive Force. Added a new Wu Jen discipline.

Mind Meld. Re-worded slightly. The target may now respond if it knows at least one language.

Telepathic Lash. Added a new psionic talent.

Vim. Added a new psionic talent.

Psionic Monsters and NPCs. Re-introduced the Cerebrilith, Faceless One, and Psion-Killer.

3/18/17 Update (Version 0.8.2)

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Changes

Will of Blades. Removed the Piercing Strike effect. Added a new effect, Strike the Soul.

Deceive Senses. Added a new Awakened Order discipline.

Mastery of Force. Inertial Armor now grants 13 + Dex mod for base AC. Grasp now deals 2d6 bludgeoning damage when the grapple begins. Note: • Inertial armor had the same relative resource cost • (2 psi = 1st level spell slot) but granted one more AC. Inertial Barrier still retains resistance to force damage, but the damage type is rare and Inertial armor • can only effect the Mystic, unlike Mage Armor.

Psionic Items. Added several psionic items.

Read more

50

.

85

Comments Section

Immortalkickass

•

9y ago

Hey, loving most of the changes so far. I'm planning to play a Soul Knife soon. Looking at their Disciplines, in Will of Blades, the Piercing Strike ability stands out as really bad. Then it struck me: It is actually True Strike for Soul Knives. We already can attack with a Bonus Action, so it is a really bad ability because attacking with both weapons is always better than giving advantage to only one weapon (same logic as True Strike + any

attack). Except True Strike doesn't cost a Level 2 spell slot (3 pp), so its probably better lol. Plus, with Hone the Blade we have big bonus to attack, making advantage of less importance.

2

2 more replies

u/TheWhiteWolves avatar

TheWhiteWolves

•

9y ago

Mystical Recovery. No longer requires a bonus action, but only occurs when spending psi points on a discipline of your order, and only once per turn

Order Disciplines. Added Order of the Soul Knife disciplines, to support the change to Mystical Recovery and provide thematic discipline options.

I like these changes, to me it feels like the soul knife just wasn't finished, its missing its own order disciplines, some things are abit lackluster (see the soul knife itself, 1d8 with no scaling, by upper levels it becomes useless as you can do more damage with a bog standard magic weapon) and personally I think it should also get the Bonus Disciplines that literally every other subclass got.

6

Troy_Wolfe

•

9y ago

All mystics get Potent Psionics. That scales the damage of soul knife.

3

u/TheWhiteWolves avatar

TheWhiteWolves

•

9y ago

Potent Psionics At 8th level, you gain the ability to infuse your weapon attacks with psychic energy. Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with a weapon, you can deal an extra 1d8 psychic damage to that target. When you reach 14th level, this extra damage increases to 2d8. In addition, you add your Intelligence modifier to any damage roll you make for a psionic talent.

This is what the text says.

This doesn't fix the scaling issue as it can apply that to any weapon the mystic uses so a magic weapon still becomes a better option than their soul knife as it gets this plus the

magic weapon bonuses. As for the Int mod that wouldn't effect the knife afaik as it only effects psionic talents which the soul knife isn't.

3

6 more replies
u/Xethik avatar
Xethik

•

9y ago

I think the Soul Knife's lack of a magic enhancement bonus is supposed to be made up by Hone the Blade, which is only usable on the Soul Knife and not any magic weapon.

As for bonus disciplines, I'd be slightly worried with how strong Consumptive Knife can be. Having bonus disciplines could make the Soul Knife a better caster-Mystic if it manages to get a few kills throughout the day (ignoring cheese with bags of rats to infinitely replenish psi points). Right now, lower versatility helps keep that from happening.

But yes, I agree that the Soul Knife should get disciplines for its Order, even if only for flavor.

2

6 more replies

1 more reply
u/lobstaris avatar
lobstaris

•

9y ago

Seeing as how r/dndnext is all over the Mystic right now, why not post your revision there and see what they think?

I also wanted to say that I have your full Mystic from a year ago and while I only glanced through it, I appreciated all the work put into it and trusted its huge amount of feedback and discussion. When the official version came out, I immediately considered how it compared to yours.

3

u/zDnD avatar
zDnD
OP

•

9y ago

I probably will when I get home tonight, since it seems to be pretty well received so far. It would be nice to get more feedback there too.

I was pleasantly surprised to see a few things from my version in the latest official draft.

2

[deleted]

•

9y ago

yanweng

•

9y ago

What are everyone's thoughts on being able to switch their Psionic Focus with a bonus action?

1

1 more reply

u/Xethik avatar

Xethik

•

9y ago

Looking forward to digging into this again. Quite enjoyed the previous revisions!

2

1 more reply

malignantmind

•

9y ago

I suggest making the psi limit per turn. Currently, I'm pretty sure you can stack a bunch of the free action abilities on a single attack to nova like crazy.

That said, I love your version of the Mystic and I have a player playing a soul knife from your previous version, and so far it's working great.

2

2 more replies

u/Primelibrarian avatar

Primelibrarian

•

9y ago

Cool project like your previous work.

Concerning additional skills for certain Orders, you could simply grant them increased proficiency in said skill. Or expertise as it is called. For example the orders can add their prof to two class skills.

Concerning Magic Missile and Psionic Blast, thanks for being reasonable. There has been plenty of kneejerk reactions. A lot people simply jump to conclusions. Also note that MM has TWICE the range of PB (120 vs 60). As well as being able to target different foes. So yes PB does slightly more damage.

The additional Disciplines should be spread out. At the moment you get them all at lvl 1. Maybe one should be obtained at lvl 5 and the other at lv 10.

2

2 more replies
dream6601

•

9y ago

I'm eager to see where you go from here,

I've been playing a Mystic from your book, Order of the Invisible Hand. Now I find myself at a loss for what to update the character to.

Mastery of Force is well perfect, but WuJen is full of so much weirdness that doesn't fit my character at all.

So hopefully you'll give me a true telekinetic order in the future, and some interesting disciplines. And please no more of this eastern spirituality, more sci-fi!

2

4 more replies
Leandro35

•

9y ago

A Wild Talent feat, and something like warcaster for psionics can be nice.

2

u/zDnD avatar
zDnD
OP

•

9y ago

Check page 16, under Customization Options. The only feats I've added so far are psionic versions of War Caster, Mage Slayer, and Magic Initiate.

2

HazeZero

•

9y ago

May I suggest for your consideration.....

You make Mind Meld officially 2way communication. According to Jeremy Crawford's twitter, its 1 way. If its not two-way way waste a talent choice for it. I personally think Crawford made a mistake in his answer, and Mind Meld allows for 2way communication. Otherwise, the mystic has NO way of having a solely telepathic communication, with the closest being the Nomad's Psychic Speech, but that is verbal communication. If you like, I can offer you something of a side-by-side comparison between the base class Telepathy and Mind Meld. (I have been posting it in various comments on the D&Dnext reddit.

I think, and I could be wrong, I also didn't catch it in your update nor in the base class, but Mystic does not have a way to Astral Project and to me, that is quite odd.

2

1 more reply

u/mistermof avatar

mistermof

•

9y ago

Although I LOVE how modular this class is, no other class can match this. Personally I think the classes needed more versatility that isn't attached to archetypes.

To try and curb this on the Mystic:

I think the psi cost for non-Order powers should increase. Either that or make the effects weaker. You should be the best at using your Orders disciplines. Maybe reducing the psi limit by 2 whenever you're using a power from a discipline not in your Order. I think this works well with a system that allows the Mystic to break the psi-limit a few times per turn.

More focus on conditions vs xd6-8 dmg per psi point. For example, Awakened Mystics could frighten, charm, or stun for a number of rounds equal to psi points spent. Avatar Mystics seem to do this pretty well, I'm mostly concerned about the many different ways to simply deal psychic damage and a condition for one round.

You can take non-Order disciplines at certain levels but these you cannot swap out. You've invested too much time learning the foreign discipline to just swap it.

You can only use the psychic focus from a discipline in your Order. OR tone down the

psychic foci and only allow Mystics to use it's full potential if it comes from their Orders discipline.

Powers that emulate spells should be equal in potency.

Using powers subtly should cost psi-points or concentration or using up your psychic focus. Or a combination of these.

These should prevent a min maxer from taking advantage of the Mystic and make choosing an Order a more significant decision.

2

u/dmesel avatar

dmesel

•

9y ago

Really sad that you are trying to enhance WotC's version rather than updating yours. I have so many problems with the UA take that it's hard to list all of them. Psionic Mastery is the clumsiest, most needlessly complex feature I've ever seen. The capstone is extremely lackluster and does not make you feel more powerful, as opposed to the awesome Ingrained Thought capstone of your own version 0.7. Mystical Recovery seems both overpowered (granted, I'm no expert in 5e balance, but that's my knee jerk reaction) and completely bland, since it does not "feel" psionic-ky, at least to me. And, as you said yourself, it lacks any way to use awesome, high level powers akin to 8th and 9th level spells. After such a long wait, this UA was really disheartening.

7

u/zDnD avatar

zDnD

OP

•

9y ago

Understandable, and I appreciate that. I hesitate to deviate too much from the official version, because I think it would be much easier to get people to adopt something that's similar rather than radically different. I may end up with an alternative version that's closer to my last draft, if I can't work something satisfying out with this one.

2

TheOldTubaroo

•

9y ago

I think Psionic Mastery as a feature is fine, it was just terribly worded in this release. Once it gets properly rewritten for clarity it'll be good - multiple concentration is something I can see being pretty useful.

2

u/Primelibrarian avatar

Primelibrarian

•

9y ago

I have suggestion. Remove telepahty from the class. But keep the almost identical talent. The Order of Awakened should/could get that specific talent for free. Especially if you remove its bonus class skills Otherwise the class as a whole get way to much, way to early. The choice for telepathy still exists in the form of the talent

1

humanon

•

9y ago

Excellent update!

One question, do martial archetypes still pick their disciplines from Immortal and Soul Knife or have you added nomad as well?

2

1 more reply

humanon

•

9y ago

Is the Deceive Senses discipline gone? or was it consolidate discipline?

1

3 more replies

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The Psionic Handbook - Tweaking the Mystic and adding homebrewed psionic-themed content, including new disciplines, talents, psionic class options, feats, and more!

Hello [r/UnearthedArcana](#). Some of you may remember my attempt to continue the previous draft of the mystic about a year ago. I took a break from working on it and kind of just assumed there wasn't much interest in it, until I saw a few posts talking about my version of the mystic yesterday. Whoops.

Anyway, since the mystic has been updated, I wanted to take a go at it again, as we now have a better idea of what the final version of the class will be like. Keep in mind that this is a very rough draft right now. As always, constructive criticism and feedback are very much appreciated.

Links

Version 0.8.2

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Version 0.8 Google Drive

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Changes (Version 0.8)

Mystical Recovery. No longer requires a bonus action, but only occurs when spending psi points on a discipline of your order, and only once per turn. Note: A common complaint for the latest version of the mystic is that it's too easy to cherrypick disciplines from other orders. This change adds incentive to focus on disciplines from your order's list, without restricting the player's choice completely. While it does free up the mystic's bonus actions slightly, my hope is that restricting it to once per turn and only on your order's disciplines will compensate.

Soul Knife. No longer requires a bonus action to manifest or dismiss. May take the form of any melee weapon, but the form has no effect on how much damage is dealt by the soul knife. Added the ability to transform a magic weapon to your soul knife, akin to the warlock's blade pact weapon. Note: I felt that costing the soul knife their bonus action to "draw" and "sheathe" their weapon was a bit much. I opened up the option to form the soul knife into other weapons for flavor, because the fantasy of having an energy greatsword appeals to me, personally.

Phantom Knife. Removed. Notes: Phantom Knife seems too much like "at level 14, you only miss if you roll a 1" and generally feels like a boring feature in spite of its uniqueness.

Hone the Blade. Added clarification that Hone the Blade requires no action.

Bladewind. Added in place of Phantom Knife. Functions identically to the hunter ranger's Whirlwind Attack.

Order Disciplines. Added Order of the Soul Knife disciplines, to support the change to Mystical Recovery and provide thematic discipline options.

Bestial Form. Bestial Claws is now a "melee discipline attack", which uses your discipline attack modifier for its attack roll. Notes: The Sage Advice response about Bestial Claws seems to imply that it uses your strength for the attack roll, which seems fairly underpowered for a class that has no incentive to raise strength.

Brute Force. The knock back power now uses a bonus action instead of a reaction.

New disciplines. Added several new disciplines: Alacrity, Displacement, Disruptive Strikes, Elemental Weapon, Force Bulwark, Mastery of the Void, Mental Veil, Metapsionics, Predation, Shape Matter, Spectral Throw, Will of Blades, Wrathful Guardian

New talents. Added several new talents: Distract, Crystal Burst, Hidden Blade, Unearthly Terror, Ballistic Attack

Psionic class archetypes. Added Psychic Warrior for fighter and Lurk for rogue. Notes: These are basically just psionic ripoffs of the Eldritch Knight and Arcane Trickster, intended to be placeholders until I or someone else can come up with something more interesting.

Customization options. Added rules for multiclassing with the mystic class. Also added psionic-themed feats.

Thoughts

Possibly reduce the number of skill proficiencies granted by Order of the Awakened, Nomad, and Wu Jen. Mystics have a lot of versatility in terms of skill proficiencies, which may step on the toes of rogues and bards too much.

I considered lowering the damage of the Psychic Assault discipline's Psionic Blast from 1d8 per psi point to 1d6 as a kneejerk reaction, but have decided against it for now. Magic Missile sets precedent for dealing damage with no save or attack roll required. Comparing Psionic Blast and Magic Missile, using psi points equivalent to the spell slots used by Magic Missile, leaving Psionic Blast as in its current state falls very close to Magic Missile's damage. While it does pull ahead of Magic Missile, there are several creatures that are immune to psychic damage altogether, while Magic Missile doesn't suffer from any creatures being immune to force damage.

Psi Points	1d8 Psionic Blast	1d6 Psionic Blast	Magic Missile	Spell Level
2	2d8 (9)	2d6 (7)	1d4+1 x3 (10.5)	1
3	3d8 (13.5)	3d6 (10.5)	1d4+1 x4 (14)	2
5	5d8 (22.5)	5d6 (17.5)	1d4+1 x5 (17.5)	3
6	6d8 (27)	6d6 (21)	1d4+1 x6 (21)	4
7	7d8 (31.5)	7d6 (24.5)	1d4+1 x7 (24.5)	5

Is The Soul Knife feature Hone the Blade too strong at a +4 bonus?

Perhaps some of the many Intelligence and Charisma saves within the discipline powers should be changed to Wisdom, as many monsters have low Intelligence.

I dislike the Psionic Mastery feature, and wish WotC would have gone with something that increases your Psi Limit a limited number of times per day, as I had done. As it stands now, your Psi Limit never exceeds 7, effectively capping you at effects on par with 5th level spells. This limits how powerful discipline effects can be, and makes a lot

of unique, high-level effects impossible to incorporate.

I've noticed a lot of comments along the lines of "this homebrew is better than the official thing" and requests to update my previous take on the mystic, but I have to admit that I'd prefer to tweak the official version into something more enjoyable than to scrap it.

To-do

Full balance pass over all disciplines.

Re-make psionic monsters and NPCs from the previous draft.

Add psionic equivalents of magic items.

Create more interesting archetypes for fighter and rogue.

Create a psionic archetype for monks.

Add more things to the to-do list.

3/16/17 Update (Version 0.8.1)

Google Drive

Mega.nz

Changes

Minor formatting adjustments.

Awakened and Wu Jen mystics now gain only one additional skill proficiency, and gain expertise in one skill they're proficient in. Nomad retains its flexible proficiency, but only gains one now. Note: I wanted to reduce the amount of "mystics can do too much!" feeling that came with being proficient in 4 skills, on top of psychic focus.

Psionic Mastery. Re-wrote the feature to (hopefully) be more clear, and provide the same end result as the official version.

Psi Points. The mystic now gains additional psi points at level 11, 13, 15, and 17.

Astral Manipulation. Added a new Nomad discipline, with effects related to the Astral Plane. Note: I'm very skeptical about Psionic Astral Projection. I would like to include some way to give mystics a form of astral projection, but there's already a 9th level spell for that.

Note on Psionic Mastery and Psi Point changes: I've seen a large amount of complaints about how badly worded Psionic Mastery is, so I wanted to address that first and foremost. The "spirit" of Psionic Mastery seems to be allowing the mystic to combine multiple concentration effects together in lieu of more powerful discipline effects to compete with 6th+ level spells. The official version requires an action to gain the "special psi points", which will most likely just result in mystics dumping their uses of Psionic Mastery at the start of the day to be used later. My rewrite attempts to remove that annoying type of gameplay by just granting extra points in line with what Psionic Mastery granted through its uses.

Hone the Blade. Added some wording to prevent Hone the Blade's bonus to attack and damage rolls from stacking with similar effects.

Crystalline Manifestations. Added a new Wu Jen discipline.

Destructive Force. Added a new Wu Jen discipline.

Mind Meld. Re-worded slightly. The target may now respond if it knows at least one language.

Telepathic Lash. Added a new psionic talent.

Vim. Added a new psionic talent.

Psionic Monsters and NPCs. Re-introduced the Cerebrilith, Faceless One, and Psion-Killer.

3/18/17 Update (Version 0.8.2)

Google Drive

Mega.nz

Changes

Will of Blades. Removed the Piercing Strike effect. Added a new effect, Strike the Soul.

Deceive Senses. Added a new Awakened Order discipline.

Mastery of Force. Inertial Armor now grants 13 + Dex mod for base AC. Grasp now deals 2d6 bludgeoning damage when the grapple begins. Note: • Inertial armor had the same relative resource cost • (2 psi = 1st level spell slot) but granted one more AC. Inertial Barrier still retains resistance to force damage, but the damage type is rare and Inertial armor • can only effect the Mystic, unlike Mage Armor.

Psionic Items. Added several psionic items.

50

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85

Comments Section

Immortalkickass

•

9y ago

Hey, loving most of the changes so far. I'm planning to play a Soul Knife soon. Looking at their Disciplines, in Will of Blades, the Piercing Strike ability stands out as really bad. Then it struck me: It is actually True Strike for Soul Knives. We already can attack with a Bonus Action, so it is a really bad ability because attacking with both weapons is always better than giving advantage to only one weapon (same logic as True Strike + any attack). Except True Strike doesn't cost a Level 2 spell slot (3 pp), so its probably better lol. Plus, with Hone the Blade we have big bonus to attack, making advantage of less importance.

2

2 more replies

u/TheWhiteWolves avatar

TheWhiteWolves

•

9y ago

Mystical Recovery. No longer requires a bonus action, but only occurs when spending psi points on a discipline of your order, and only once per turn

Order Disciplines. Added Order of the Soul Knife disciplines, to support the change to Mystical Recovery and provide thematic discipline options.

I like these changes, to me it feels like the soul knife just wasn't finished, its missing its own order disciplines, some things are abit lackluster (see the soul knife itself, 1d8 with no scaling, by upper levels it becomes useless as you can do more damage with a bog standard magic weapon) and personally I think it should also get the Bonus Disciplines that literally every other subclass got.

6

Troy_Wolfe

•

9y ago

All mystics get Potent Psionics. That scales the damage of soul knife.

3

u/TheWhiteWolves avatar

TheWhiteWolves

-

9y ago

Potent Psionics At 8th level, you gain the ability to infuse your weapon attacks with psychic energy. Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with a weapon, you can deal an extra 1d8 psychic damage to that target. When you reach 14th level, this extra damage increases to 2d8. In addition, you add your Intelligence modifier to any damage roll you make for a psionic talent.

This is what the text says.

This doesn't fix the scaling issue as it can apply that to any weapon the mystic uses so a magic weapon still becomes a better option than their soul knife as it gets this plus the magic weapon bonuses. As for the Int mod that wouldn't effect the knife afaik as it only effects psionic talents which the soul knife isn't.

3

6 more replies

u/Xethik avatar

Xethik

-

9y ago

I think the Soul Knife's lack of a magic enhancement bonus is supposed to be made up by Hone the Blade, which is only usable on the Soul Knife and not any magic weapon.

As for bonus disciplines, I'd be slightly worried with how strong Consumptive Knife can be. Having bonus disciplines could make the Soul Knife a better caster-Mystic if it manages to get a few kills throughout the day (ignoring cheese with bags of rats to infinitely replenish psi points). Right now, lower versatility helps keep that from happening.

But yes, I agree that the Soul Knife should get disciplines for its Order, even if only for flavor.

2

6 more replies

1 more reply

u/lobstaris avatar

lobstaris

-

9y ago

Seeing as how r/dndnext is all over the Mystic right now, why not post your revision there and see what they think?

I also wanted to say that I have your full Mystic from a year ago and while I only glanced through it, I appreciated all the work put into it and trusted its huge amount of feedback and discussion. When the official version came out, I immediately considered how it compared to yours.

3

u/zDnD avatar

zDnD

OP

-

9y ago

I probably will when I get home tonight, since it seems to be pretty well received so far. It would be nice to get more feedback there too.

I was pleasantly surprised to see a few things from my version in the latest official draft.

2

[deleted]

-

9y ago

yanweng

-

9y ago

What are everyone's thoughts on being able to switch their Psionic Focus with a bonus action?

1

1 more reply

u/Xethik avatar

Xethik

-

9y ago

Looking forward to digging into this again. Quite enjoyed the previous revisions!

2

1 more reply

malignantmind

-

9y ago

I suggest making the psi limit per turn. Currently, I'm pretty sure you can stack a bunch of the free action abilities on a single attack to nova like crazy.

That said, I love your version of the Mystic and I have a player playing a soul knife from your previous version, and so far it's working great.

2

2 more replies

u/Primelibrarian avatar

Primelibrarian

•

9y ago

Cool project like your previous work.

Concerning additional skills for certain Orders, you could simply grant them increased proficiency in said skill. Or expertise as it is called. For example the orders can add their prof to two class skills.

Concerning Magic Missile and Psionic Blast, thanks for being reasonable. There has been plenty of kneejerk reactions. A lot people simply jump to conclusions. Also note that MM has TWICE the range of PB (120 vs 60). As well as being able to target different foes. So yes PB does slightly more damage.

The additional Disciplines should be spread out. At the moment you get them all at lvl 1. Maybe one should be obtained at lvl 5 and the other at lv 10.

2

2 more replies

dream6601

•

9y ago

I'm eager to see where you go from here,

I've been playing a Mystic from your book, Order of the Invisible Hand. Now I find myself at a loss for what to update the character to.

Mastery of Force is well perfect, but WuJen is full of so much weirdness that doesn't fit my character at all.

So hopefully you'll give me a true telekinetic order in the future, and some interesting disciplines. And please no more of this eastern spirituality, more sci-fi!

2

4 more replies

Leandro35

-

9y ago

A Wild Talent feat, and something like warcaster for psionics can be nice.

2

u/zDnD avatar

zDnD

OP

-

9y ago

Check page 16, under Customization Options. The only feats I've added so far are psionic versions of War Caster, Mage Slayer, and Magic Initiate.

2

HazeZero

-

9y ago

May I suggest for your consideration.....

You make Mind Meld officially 2way communication. According to Jeremy Crawford's twitter, its 1 way. If its not two-way way waste a talent choice for it. I personally think Crawford made a mistake in his answer, and Mind Meld allows for 2way communication. Otherwise, the mystic has NO way of having a solely telepathic communication, with the closest being the Nomad's Psychic Speech, but that is verbal communication. If you like, I can offer you something of a side-by-side comparison between the base class Telepathy and Mind Meld. (I have been posting it in various comments on the D&Dnext reddit.

I think, and I could be wrong, I also didn't catch it in your update nor in the base class, but Mystic does not have a way to Astral Project and to me, that is quite odd.

2

1 more reply

u/mistermof avatar

mistermof

-

9y ago

Although I LOVE how modular this class is, no other class can match this. Personally I think the classes needed more versatility that isn't attached to archetypes.

To try and curb this on the Mystic:

I think the psi cost for non-Order powers should increase. Either that or make the effects weaker. You should be the best at using your Orders disciplines. Maybe reducing the

psi limit by 2 whenever you're using a power from a discipline not in your Order. I think this works well with a system that allows the Mystic to break the psi-limit a few times per turn.

More focus on conditions vs xd6-8 dmg per psi point. For example, Awakened Mystics could frighten, charm, or stun for a number of rounds equal to psi points spent. Avatar Mystics seem to do this pretty well, I'm mostly concerned about the many different ways to simply deal psychic damage and a condition for one round.

You can take non-Order disciplines at certain levels but these you cannot swap out. You've invested too much time learning the foreign discipline to just swap it.

You can only use the psychic focus from a discipline in your Order. OR tone down the psychic foci and only allow Mystics to use it's full potential if it comes from their Orders discipline.

Powers that emulate spells should be equal in potency.

Using powers subtly should cost psi-points or concentration or using up your psychic focus. Or a combination of these.

These should prevent a min maxer from taking advantage of the Mystic and make choosing an Order a more significant decision.

2

u/dmesel avatar

dmesel

•

9y ago

Really sad that you are trying to enhance WotC's version rather than updating yours. I have so many problems with the UA take that it's hard to list all of them. Psionic Mastery is the clumsiest, most needlessly complex feature I've ever seen. The capstone is extremely lackluster and does not make you feel more powerful, as opposed to the awesome Ingrained Thought capstone of your own version 0.7. Mystical Recovery seems both overpowered (granted, I'm no expert in 5e balance, but that's my knee jerk reaction) and completely bland, since it does not "feel" psionic-ky, at least to me. And, as you said yourself, it lacks any way to use awesome, high level powers akin to 8th and 9th level spells. After such a long wait, this UA was really disheartening.

7

u/zDnD avatar

zDnD

OP

•

9y ago

Understandable, and I appreciate that. I hesitate to deviate too much from the official version, because I think it would be much easier to get people to adopt something that's similar rather than radically different. I may end up with an alternative version that's closer to my last draft, if I can't work something satisfying out with this one.

2

TheOldTubaroo

-

9y ago

I think Psionic Mastery as a feature is fine, it was just terribly worded in this release. Once it gets properly rewritten for clarity it'll be good - multiple concentration is something I can see being pretty useful.

2

u/Primelibrarian avatar

Primelibrarian

-

9y ago

I have suggestion. Remove telepahty from the class. But keep the almost identical talent. The Order of Awakened should/could get that specific talent for free. Especially if you remove its bonus class skills Otherwise the class as a whole get way to much, way to early. The choice for telepathy still exists in the form of the talent

1

humanon

-

9y ago

Excellent update!

One question, do martial archetypes still pick their disciplines from Immortal and Soul Knife or have you added nomad as well?

2

1 more reply

humanon

-

9y ago

Is the Deceive Senses discipline gone? or was it consolidate discipline?

1

3 more replies

Chrisuchan

-

9y ago

Is it possible to do so you can copy stuff from the pdf? Atm it isn't working.

Great formatting and work. Will comment on powerlevel soon. Actually gonna playtest your version instead.

1

u/TheUmbra avatar

TheUmbra

•

9y ago

I think you left something important out when rewriting Psionic Mastery. The 9 or 11 psi point can be used for actions and bonus actions that are NOT concentration as well as for concentration. You put that the 9 or 11 psi points could only be used for concentration powers. 2nd: Does Lethal Strike or Potent Psionics activate when Bestial Claws is used? I can understand the former not being able to be used on Bestial Claws but Potent Psionics not being activated makes the ability next to useless for immortals because the go to attack would be Bestial Claws potentially combined with Brute Strike. Otherwise, the only way the an immortal could realistically use Potent Psionics would be to hit the enemy with a dagger (with no shield because that would ruin Immortal Durability) and potentially use Lethal Strike on it. Dagger is really the only option because it is the only simple finesse weapon (immortals can't access martial weapons) and immortals need it to be finesse because immortals have a decently high dex unless they want to pour stat points into strength. Pouring stat points into strength doesn't make sense because immortals have to have high int., con., and dex for their Immortal Durability and Psionic Resilience. 3rd: I think that Iron Hide's cost needs to be reduced given how it costs 5 psi points (a lvl 3 spell) to gain 5 AC till the end of your next turn when the 1st level shield spell increases your AC by 5 till the start of your next turn and blocks magic missiles for the equivalent of 2 psi points. Maybe make it a 2-7 (or 2-5 or 2-6) cost with and AC boost equal to 2 + psi point cost or make it a 1-7 (or 1-6) cost with an AC boost equal to 1 + psi point cost. That way it wont be as good as shield (except for lasting slightly longer, the end of your turn and not the beginning) which it probably should be due to other AC boosters like Tough Hide available that stack on it and due to the fact that immortals are going to have a higher base AC than wizards (although eldritch knights can have high AC and the ability to cast shield). Though, it should be noted that an immortal with 20 dex and con, tough hide active, and their focus on Iron Durability will have an AC of 23 (or more with higher Dex/Con) and can increase that to an AC of 30 each round they use Iron Hide, making them, well... immortal, at a high psi cost per round however. Alternatively, they could just use Healing Journey whenever they are attacked so that they only get hit once per round (and heal ~10 hp too!). Healing Journey is somewhat similar to the 3rd level spell blink.

1

u/nikkibear44 avatar

nikkibear44

•

9y ago

so can one order take a Discipline from any other order?

1

1 more reply
humanon

•

9y ago

Any particular reason for removing the Night Eyes talent?

1

u/mistermof avatar
mistermof

•

9y ago

Just a few suggestions. I am also starting on the path of tweaking the Mystic for my campaigns.

1.) I think some of your new disciplines can be put into the originals. Deceive Senses is thematically covered by Psychic Phantoms already. Destructive Force could fit into Mastery of Force since it focuses on dealing force damage. Mental Veil should fit into Intellect Fortress, or at least be an Awakened Discipline. Elemental Weapon should fit into Psionic Weapon. I think I can see why you made these extra disciplines to avoid bloating the original disciplines but it just comes off as extraneous.

2.) I'm working on some order features. Right now, the Awakened Order can turn single target powers into aura effects by halving the range. The Avatar Order can turn aura powers into single target effects and can double the range. These could make pretty cool features for either of your archetypes!

Also what do you think of going through the disciplines one by one. For example, Mastery of Earth and Wood...half of those powers have little to do with Earth and Wood. I would put the power that lets you throw your weapon into Psionic Weapon, make Warp Armor /Weapon the core components of a new discipline focused on debuffing (probably some necrotic based discipline similar to your Void one). The Damage resistance feature could probably stay but I honestly think that should be the power Inertial Armor grants. Just wanted to hear your thoughts on the matter.

Awesome homebrew though, you have rad and inspirational ideas!

1

u/wwusirius avatar
wwusirius

•

9y ago

I'm not sure if you're still around as this is a month after the initial post. I'm currently

playing a character with the v.7 and wanting to augment or even change to this updated version as it's still early in the campaign. I'll echo what others have said about liking your previous version a lot and I hope you continue to expand on your designs.

Also, not being able to select text in the PDF is a pain. Trying to copy/paste notes to send my DM is not possible with this version for some reason. Hopefully in the next update that functionality will be restored (sadly I don't know enough about adobe, maybe missing a setting?)

Thanks for your work. I love the class.

1

u/ZeroTheCrow avatar

ZeroTheCrow

•

9y ago

I know this would be weird in 5e's design for feats, but can there be a feat to bring back psionic demiplane creation? Personally, I'd like to see it take the shape it had in 3.5 where you essentially grew your own plane. For design efforts I'd like to think you have free access to substance from the elemental planes, but you need to bring in flora & fauna. As for actual castings it should take at least 7 psi points (maybe have the prerequisite/use of psionic mastery?) and take 8 hours. Once created opening a gate is an action and costs 7 psi points (there needs to be a provision that while inside the gate can be temporally dismissed, but you cannot remove your gate permanently while inside your demiplane. [This should prevent characters from getting stuck]). Using the feat while inside your demiplane allows you to either extend the space of your demiplane or create structures. Lastly for the safety of the economy: Include a line that things created with the use of the demiplane creation disappear when taken from the demiplane. Will be attempting a write up for the feat and posting it as a comment to this one as soon as it is finished.

1

2 more replies

u/TheUmbra avatar

TheUmbra

•

9y ago

I was pondering min maxing with regard to Psionics today and I came across something I found interesting: If I did my math and read the rules right, it should be possible for a 15th level Psion to do about 336 (or 339 with augment weapon) damage on one hit (at the cost of 44 (or 49 with augment weapon) psi points) if they have Psionic Contingency prepared (with 5 psi points of elemental weapon), have one round to prepare (where they will use Marked for Death as well as powers that increase the damage of weapon attacks), and use Psionic Mastery both turns. The attack itself would be done with an Animate Weapon attack (which states that even though you are not holding the weapon

at the time of the attack, the attack is a "one handed melee weapon attack," allowing you to stack on other effects that increase the damage of a weapon attack this turn or before the next is over) with a long-sword (or other one handed weapon that does 1d8 damage). No power has to be used more than once for this to work.

The Math: $(1d8 + 7d10 + 7d10 + 5d8 + 2d8 + 7d6 + 4d6 + 4d6) \times 2 + 5$ (or 8 with augment weapon) = 336 (or 339 for augment weapon)

Giant form could also be used before hand for an additional $2d6 \times 2$ with an extra cost of 7 psi points, in which case the damage would be 350 (or 353 with augment weapon)

I can list the specific powers if you want, I just don't know how many people will read this.

1

1 more reply
u/TheUmbra avatar
TheUmbra

•

9y ago

Also, your psi point amounts are off for lvl 18-20. Psions gain an extra 7 psi points at lvl 18 in the WoTC version. Lvl 18-20 should have 115 psi points.

You have discussed this before I believe, but you may want to have mystical recovery activate only once per round, not turn.

Breath of the Green Dragon should be changed to say "each creature in the cone..."

Also, you should add some epic boons (presumably spell equivalent boons).

1

u/ImBlueMagic avatar
ImBlueMagic

•

9y ago

I like what you've done to the class, I would suggest further balancing on the basics: disciplines that cost psi points should only be usable once per turn, as they have the same power level as lvl 1 or higher spells, that should equalize them a bit. soul knives should be able to leave your hands without dissipating, mastery of wood and earth should be able to use your soul knives for "animate weapon", and it doesn't matter if anyone else takes your soul knife, it's just garbage on their hands, as only for you they are a martial weapon with light and finesse that deal 1d8 psychic dmg. Psionic Surge, Surge of Health and Memory of One Thousand Steps are similar but don't cost the same, that becomes very clear when comparing surge of health and memory of one thousand steps, the first halves dmg on a hit and the other one makes the attack miss

and it even reallocates you!! the first cost you your psychic focus, and the second, nothing! just once per short rest, heck, you even gain memory of one thousand steps at 3rd lvl.... that's in need of balancing, I would make the player gain them all at lvl 3rd of their orders (moving the psionic investigation and immortal durability that IMO are stronger than the surges to lvl 6) and all cost your psychic focus until you end a rest, or alternatively all of them once per rest. I also think a lot of the disciplines need balancing, but IMO it's just looking at the damage and balance it and call it a day (for example: psychic assault psychic crush deals 8d8 psychic dmg on a 20ft cube and stuns the affected creatures on a failed save, if that's not OP, I don't know what is)

As a side note, for your wording of the soul knife, I guess you can conjure a pair of psychic great axes, one on each hand, and intimidate your opponent or smth, I really like that you can go bonkers with them and gain no mechanical benefit... just picture it, it's awesome!! Imagine a halfling dual wielding great axes, it's more hilarious than scary xDDDD and then, he/she tries to act though...

1

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2

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The Painter Class, wield arcane paint to remake the world with this homebrew class! (Spoilers for the game Expedition 33)

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SPOILER

The Painter Class, wield arcane paint to remake the world with this homebrew class!

(Spoilers for the game Expedition 33)

r/UearthedArcana - The Painter Class, wield arcane paint to remake the world with this homebrew class! (Spoilers for the game Expedition 33)

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Appreciated!)

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Wizard Subclass: School of Spellpaper | Would you rather skip a wizard's morning
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zDnD

The Psionic Handbook - A homebrew continuation of the Mystic, including new disciplines, talents, psionic class options, monsters, and more!

Update - Feb 20

Just a small update once again. Sometime next week I'll try to get a post out with more creatures, and a bundle of psionic items.

Links

Discussion of changes can be found here

Google Drive

Mega.nz

Update - Feb 18

Apologies for the lack of responses or updates lately. I've been surprisingly busy. Anyhow, here's a small update, primarily to balance disciplines and other class features.

Links

Change log

Google Drive

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Hello r/UearthedArcana!

You may have seen my posts in the last few weeks, where I've been working on

homebrewing more content for the mystic class. Since my last post, I've begun a minor bit of work adding psionic monsters, and the next update (probably tomorrow or the day after) will include psionic-themed magic items.

Some highlights:

35 new disciplines (8 more since version 0.4)

6 new talents

10 more levels for the Mystic

Order of the Knife and Order of the Invisible Hand archetypes for the Mystic

Psionic-themed versions of the Eldritch Knight and Arcane Trickster archetypes

12 Mystic NPCs, 3 for each order

4 psion-themed monsters

Small balance adjustments to class/archetype features and disciplines

Additional rules governing the use of psionics, such as how psionics and rage interact

Links

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Changes Since February's Unearthed Arcana

Added the following to the rules for "Using a Discipline": "You may only use each option from one of your disciplines once per turn, but may use different options normally." This is intended to reduce the potential burst from stacking Lethal Strikes on multiple hits.

Activating a powers with psi point costs of 9, 10, 11, and 13 can only be done once per day each. This is to mirror the limitations of the Spell Points rule variant presented in the DMG, which only allows a caster to use spell points to create spell slots of each level of 6th or higher once per day.

Barbarians may not use psionic powers or maintain psychic focus while raging.

The Consumptive Power feature gained at level 10 has been changed. Initially, it rewarded 5 psi points at the cost of 1 HP per mystic level. The result was that at 10th level, the mystic could regain 5 psi points in exchange for 50 HP, and at level 20, the mystic could regain 5 psi points in exchange for 100 HP. The psi points gained does not scale with level, while the cost for the same benefit does. What I propose: You regain psi points up to your Mystic level at the cost of 5 HP per point.

Added 35 new disciplines, and more discipline effects for several of the original disciplines.

Added 6 new psionic talents.

Extended the Mystic's talents known, disciplines known, psi points, and psi maximum out to 20th level. Added a level 18 and 20 feature for the Mystic, as well as additional Mystic Order features at 14th level.

Took a stab at creating the previously teased Order of the Knife and Order of the Invisible Hand

Other minor balancing tweaks to disciplines.

Re-worked the Strength of Mind so that it can be used by multiclass mystic. Wording may need to be adjusted for ease of understanding. Essentially: If you have proficiency in Wisdom, Dexterity, or Constitution saving throws, you can trade proficiency in any of those 3 for proficiency in any other ability score. The intent is to allow a character who is, for example, a monk (with Strength and Dexterity saving throw proficiency) to replace their "good" save (Wis, Dex, Con) with another, just as a non-multiclass Mystic replaces its "good" save (Wis).

Mystical Recovery now functions once per turn. This is to prevent chaining effects for massive healing, for example: an Order of the Immortal mystic with 20 Int, sitting at 5 out of 100 HP, uses Seize the Initiative (HP: 10/100) as a reaction at the start of combat, followed by Surge of Speed (HP: 15/100), and then uses Lethal Strike to boost his attack (20/100 HP), healing for 15 HP in one turn at the cost of 4 psi points. It may need to be adjusted further to only function on the mystic's turn, to prevent healing on reactions.

Added prerequisites for multiclassing into Mystic, and defined rules for psi points when multiclassing.

Small terminology changes within the first section of the "Psionics" chapter. In summary: effects from disciplines and psionic talents are collectively called powers, just like the effects arcane and divine casters create are called spells. A creature that uses psionic powers is referred to as a psion, just as magic users are known as spellcasters.

You cannot spend more psi points on the Lethal Strike effect of Psionic Weapon than half your psi limit. This is to address the issue of low level mystics being able to deliver massive burst damage by dumping 5 psi points on a 5d10 Lethal Strike at 5th level. Now caps at 6 psi points. Also, cost vs bonus damage should now match up better with the paladin's Divine Smite feature.

Changes Since v0.4

Changed the telekinetics psychic focus effect.

Added a new talent, far hand.

Added psionic variants of the Eldritch Knight and Arcane Trickster archetypes.

Added rules for multiclassing with psionics.

Added new psionic NPCs and monsters.

Discipline effects with a cost of 9 or greater are now marked with a "T" to remind the player of the daily limit on high psi point expenditures (see Effect Options and Psi Points, page 14).

Added several new disciplines: acrikinesis, cryokinesis, electrokinesis, legacy of the void, * photokinesis*, pyrokinesis, touch of the void.

Aspect of the beast's form of doom effect now named avatar of doom, transforms the user into a specific monster rather than modifying their base form.

Formatting adjustments. Added art throughout the document.

To-Do

Update a handful of psionic races from previous editions.

Create more disciplines for Order of the Knife.

Create a monk archetype with a psionic theme.

Add a section full of psionic-themed monsters. Ideas:

Psionic-wielding demons and devils.

Psionic equivalent of a lich.

Perhaps change astral construct to create a specific creature, akin to 3e's method, with options to choose from upon creation.

Psionic-themed magic items.

Dorjes: Elongated, slender crystals that contain a small handful of discipline effects, and psi points that recharge at dawn. Essentially, they're psionic wands.

Power Stones: Simple stones with a one-use discipline effect stored within. The psionic equivalent of spell scrolls.

Psicrowns: Grants the wearer access to a discipline and a small pool of psi points to use on that discipline. Similar to staves for spellcasters.

As always, sorry about any errors or obviously over/under-powered features. I'm only human! I can't express enough how much I appreciate the feedback I've received so far. Thanks again!

Read more

87

.

51

Comments Section

u/Xethik avatar

Xethik

•

10y ago

This is pretty great. I still haven't been able to go over all the disciplines like I keep telling myself I will, but I am tempted to port my Order of the Lurk subclass to be based on your version!

Awesome job man.

2

u/zDnD avatar

zDnD

OP

•

10y ago

Thanks! And that's alright. It probably doesn't help that I keep adding more, haha.

If you don't mind, I'd like to borrow a handful of your lurk discipline ideas for the Order of the Knife, since it's currently behind on options.

2

u/Xethik avatar

Xethik

-

10y ago

Not in the least bit! Order of the Lurk started out as an Order of the Knife replacement, so there is a lot that would be thematically appropriate.

2

2 more replies

Aerodozz

-

10y ago

I love psionics and this is great! Thanks for putting this together.

4

u/zDnD avatar

zDnD

OP

-

10y ago

Same here! I've always thought it was pretty cool, but never had the chance to play with it in previous editions. Now that I'm in a group that takes turns switching between campaigns every two weeks, I actually have a chance to play it, haha.

Anyway, glad you like it!

2

Aerodozz

-

10y ago

Awesome! Just curious (I'm assuming you're the DM), but how do you incorporate psionics into the lore of the world? Are certain races or cultures better attuned to it? Do you have an in-house explanation for why anti-magic effects don't work on psionics? As a future DM I'd love some ideas.

2

3 more replies

Lothlos

-

10y ago

This is an awesome guide thank you for sharing it with us.

3

1 more reply

kozog

•

10y ago

I want to add something. Talents are underused with my experience to play Mystic but if some Discipline can make the Mystic versatile like a Sorcerer... I have really loved the power Schism in previous version so there is my new version !

I made some modification with another DM to make sure everything seems correct and fair

Discipline Metapsionic

Schism (3+). As a bonus action, your mind splits into two independent parts. Each part functions in complete autonomy, like two characters in one body. Your new "second mind" does not control your body physically but is free to take one purely mental extra action and one purely mental extra reaction, maintaining concentration if applicable, until the start of your next turn, using your power point reserve for it (including Talents). If you are subject to charmed or frightened condition under this power you can make the saving throw with advantage. For each 2 additional psi point spent, you extend this power for 1 consecutive round.

2

grayseer

•

10y ago

Hey, have you made any updates recently?

3

DersitePhantom

•

10y ago

All right, I've been looking over the class features and the different disciplines for a while, and I've compiled a number of issues with them. First and foremost though, I think this is the closest anyone has gotten to a really good implementation of psionics in 5e.

Generally, I think there are three major problems above all else:

The "Psionic Fireball" effect. You really need to justify not just re-skinning a Wizard with the spell points option. Psionics should feel very distinct from magic, but a lot of the effects here are just slightly different versions of spells with different fluff.

The cost of many of the powers is too high. The 'Dazzling Speed' power gives advantage to one attack against a creature, but costs the same as a spell like Faerie

Fire, which gives advantage against a large number of foes for the whole fight. 'Few Against Many' costs the same as an encounter-changing spell like Entangle and deals 1d6 of damage. I feel like there are a lot of powers that cost 2 that should really cost 1.

Redundancy. I'll get into some specific examples later, but it feels like about a quarter of the disciplines just do something that another discipline already does, with the only difference often just being a damage type. The class is complex enough that such redundancy serves not enough of a purpose to justify its existence.

In regard to specific features and disciplines:

Deflect Blows

As a reaction when an attacker you can see makes a melee attack against you, you can make a melee weapon attack roll with your mind blade. If the result of your roll is greater than the result of your opponent's attack roll, you can reduce the total of the roll by your proficiency modifier, to a minimum of 1.

This is confusingly worded. You don't need to say "can make a melee weapon attack roll", it's just a melee weapon attack. Furthermore, the last time the ability refers to "the roll" happens immediately after it mentions a roll you make and a roll your opponent makes, which leaves a bit of ambiguity. Finally, the ability should function off of Intelligence rather than Proficiency to fit better with the 5e style.

Shed Body

At 14th level, you gain the ability to cast aside your body, briefly becoming a creature of pure thought. You can become incorporeal

While the ability is mechanically clear and not unbalanced, the fluff doesn't fit those mechanics very well. You become a "creature of pure thought" and "intangible" but can still physically interact with things and take physical damage. The fluff needs to be reworded to an ability to intentionally phase through objects rather than just intangibility, because that doesn't fit what actually happens.

Alter Perceptions

Vision of Death (10, T). You force your enemies to perceive their own death. As an action, choose any number of creatures you can see within 30 feet. Each creature must make a Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a creature is slain instantly if it has 20 hit points or fewer. If it has more than 20 hit points, it takes 6d10 psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Why is an AOE damage effect in a discipline called "Alter Perceptions"? Shouldn't there be something like Phantasmal Force or an illusion here instead? And 6d10 does an average of 33 damage, so is the instant death thing really necessary?

Faceless One

Multiattack. The faceless one makes one mind flay attack and four claw attacks.

The stat block for the Faceless One doesn't include a "Mind Flay" ability. Did you mean "Mind Blast"?

Acridkinesis & Metamorphosis

Acid Breath (11, T). As an action, your mouth spews forth vitriolic acid in a line of 100 feet long and 5 feet wide in a direction you choose.

Major Shapeshifting (9, C, T)... You gain the ability to exhale a stream of acid. For the duration, you may exhale a line of acid 5 feet wide and 30 feet long.

See, this is an example of the redundancy. There are two disciplines that let you breathe acid. At the very least, change the second one to poison or something.

Metapsionics

Dispel Psionics (5+). As an action, choose any creature, object, or psionic effect within 120 feet. Any psionic effect with a psi point cost of 5 or lower on the target ends. For each effect of a higher cost on the target, make an ability check using your psionic ability. Consult the table below to determine the DC.

The problem here isn't the ability, it's that the attached table doesn't make the slightest bit of sense. For some reason, it refers to CR instead of DC. I'm guessing this is just an editing mistake.

Mindbender

Alter Memory (7+, C). As an action, you attempt to reshape another creature's memories. One creature that you can see within 30 feet must make a Wisdom saving throw. If you are fighting the creature, it has advantage on the saving throw. On a failed save, the target becomes charmed by you for the duration.

The ability mentions a duration, but I can't find anywhere where the duration is actually specified.

Also in Mindbender

Enthrall (10, T)... On a success, the creature resists your attempts to control it, and you cannot use this effect on that creature again until you finish a long rest.

The last clause there is unnecessary because of the "T".

Mind Vault

Psychic Focus. While focused on this discipline, you gain proficiency with one skill, weapon, shield, armor, or tool of your choice. Each time you focus on this discipline, you can choose a different skill, weapon, shield, armor, or tool.

This psychic focus is significantly stronger than almost any other. This basically reads as giving proficiency in one of; all tools, all armour, or all weapons. Because you're only going to be using on of each of those categories at a time. I understand that this was taken from the UA, but I'd say it's just a bit too much.

Photokinesis

Darkness (3+). As an action, you cast the darkness spell.

Why is that "+" there?

Also in Photokinesis

Blinding Flash (5)... Undead and oozes have disadvantage on this saving throw.

Why do oozes have disadvantage on the saving throw? Oozes are immune to blindness.

Predation

Nightblade (6). When you hit a target with a melee weapon attack, you can increase the damage to that target. The target takes an extra 4d8 necrotic damage immediately and 2d8 necrotic damage at the end of its next turn.

Why is the damage delayed? Why not just have it do 6d8 damage up front? It feels like needless book-keeping. Also, how does this ability fit into the concept of the rest of the discipline being about stealth? It feels out of place. Maybe it should be slightly cheaper, but require that the attack be from hiding or during a surprise round or something.

Psionic Assault

Psychic Wave (3). As an action, you unleash a semi-solid wave of psychic energy in a 15-foot cone in front of you. Each creature in the cone must make a Strength saving throw. A target takes 2d6 psychic damage and is knocked prone on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

This is just a minor wording issue, but it needs to specify that the target doesn't get knocked prone on a successful saving throw.

Also Psionic Assault

Psychic Crush (11, T). As an action, batter the mind of a creature within 120 feet. The target must make an Intelligence saving throw. The target takes 12d10 psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

12d10 seems like a lot of damage, but for the cost of an 8th level spell slot, it's actually a bit underpowered. Finger of Death is a 7th level spell that has basically the same average damage, but also gives permanent zombie followers. I feel like Psychic Crush should have some minor additional effect like imposing disadvantage on attacks for a turn, or limiting speed, or something like that.

Psychokinesis

This discipline grants you unmatched control over energy, which you can use to devastating effect.

Psychokinesis is basically synonymous with telekinesis. This really isn't the right name for this discipline.

Also Psychokinesis

Unleash Energy (13, T). As an action, unleash the raw energy in an area, annihilating your foes. Creatures within a 30-foot sphere centered on a point you can see within 120 feet must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 6d6 each of acid, cold, fire, lightning, and thunder damage. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage.

30d6 damage in a 30' radius for the equivalent of a 9th level spell slot? Compare that to Meteor Swarm and Unleash Energy seems very underpowered.

Apparently the post was too long to post, so the second part will be my reply to this comment.

8

DersitePhantom

•

10y ago

Continued...

Psychometabolism

Psychic Focus. While focused on this discipline, you regain 2 hit point at the end of your turn as long as you have 1 or more hit points remaining.

Unlimited regeneration from level 5? No. Even the Champion's Survivor ability only regenerates up to half max HP, and that's a level 18 ability! There's a very good reason WoTC cut the regeneration ability from the Mystic before the second UA release. 5e gets most of its difficulty from attrition, and unlimited regeneration totally breaks that. I would have recommended some way to fix this ability, but see the rest of my complaints about this discipline.

Also Psychometabolism

Empathic Transfer (1+). As an action, you can spend psi points to touch another creature and heal its wounds, transferring your vitality to them. For each psi point you spend, you can transfer up to 5 hit points from yourself to the target. You cannot reduce current hit points below 1 with this effect, and you may not transfer temporary hit points. The loss of your hit points cannot be avoided in any way.

In combination with the Psychic Focus for this discipline, the Psionic Restoration discipline is pretty much entirely obsolete. It doesn't matter that you're losing a bunch of hit points, because you can just wait a few minutes and regain it all. However, without the regeneration, this ability is basically worthlessly inefficient.

Also Also Psychometabolism

Psychic Surgery (5). As an action, you touch a creature and work to heal its mind. You can end either the charmed or frightened condition on the creature, as well as one effect that causes confusion or madness.

By "creature" I'm guessing you meant "creature". Also, there's no reason to have both this and Psionic Restoration's Restore Health power. They're too similar not to fold together.

Overall, I'd suggest just kicking Psychometabolism to the curb and folding the worthwhile bits into Psionic Restoration. Healing is barely a Psionic thing anyway, there's no need to have two separate disciplines for it.

Pyrokinesis

Ignite (2). When you deal fire damage with a discipline effect or talent, you can cause one creature damaged by the power to burn. The target takes an additional 2d4 fire damage immediately, and 1d4 fire damage at the end of its next turn.

Another instance of delayed damage that just adds to the book-keeping. I know you're trying to elicit the imagery of setting a creature on fire and having them continue to burn for a short while, but that flavour isn't worth the mechanical baggage.

Telekinetics

Force Push (1+). As an action, you unleash a solid blast of force from your outstretched hand in a line 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a Strength saving throw. A creature takes 1d10 force damage for each psi point you spend on a failed save and is knocked prone, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Same issue as before about specifying that creatures don't get knocked prone if they succeed on the saving throw.

Wrathful Assault

Wrathful Attacks (6). As a bonus action, you gain advantage on melee weapon attack rolls using Strength during this turn and deal an additional die of damage with your attacks, but only against creatures that have damaged you since the end of your last turn.

"Additional die of damage" isn't terminology that 5e really uses. Something like "Additional damage equal to your Intelligence modifier" or "An extra 1d6 damage" or something like that would be more appropriate to 5e's style. Also, this is the equivalent of a 4th level spell in terms of cost, and it gives advantage on attacks for 1 turn and a small amount of conditional extra damage? Really? An effect that costs this much should be able to turn the tide of a battle.

Finally, what does the "T" stand for? "S" for "Single use" or "H" for "High level" I could understand, but I have no idea what "T" means.

Anyway, those are my criticisms based on my first run-through of the material. Despite the fact that there are lots of problems, I still really do like your implementation overall.

6

u/Bluegobln avatar

Bluegobln

•

10y ago

I can't comment so much directly on your points, because I haven't read the whole content you're commenting on, and I haven't read all of your comments either... lol

But...

From the standpoint of someone who likes to make homebrew, this kind of commentary and discussion is so so appreciated. A REAL in depth breakdown is what makes or breaks a great homebrew. It often takes more than one mind to spot the little things that throw a whole idea, no matter how well implemented in general, out of whack. Some of the best feedback I ever got was really simple, but right after it in 2nd place for best feedback ever was a giant wall of text full of ideas and fixes from end to end.

(For those curious, the best feedback I ever got was: "Half of the game, perhaps more than half, takes place outside of combat. Where is the non-combat-related stuff in this?")

9

1 more reply

8 more replies

u/ninjabro502 avatar

ninjabro502

•

10y ago

been following your work since the UA release; i really think it's coming together nicely!

2

2 more replies

grayseer

•

10y ago

Is Shed Body supposed to not have a time limit or a limit per long/short rest?

As its written now it's basically a free, permanent fly once you hit level 14, right?

2

u/zDnD avatar

zDnD

OP

•

10y ago

As its written now it's basically a free, permanent fly once you hit level 14, right?

Yep. Draconic Bloodline sorcerers get a very similar feature at the same level (Dragon Wings, page 103 of the PHB), although the Shed Body feature does have a (hopefully very minor) advantage. I've considered removing the part about being able to move through other creatures/objects, but it fit the flavor of the ability.

2

grayseer

•

10y ago

Ok, sweet. Just wanted to make sure I wasn't missing something.

2

1 more reply

2 more replies

u/Tsurumah avatar

Tsurumah

•

10y ago

I look forward to reading it!

I know my wife wants to play one if her character dies in my current campaign.

2

1 more reply

u/Intense_Wizardry avatar

Intense_Wizardry

•

10y ago

I think it's weird the way you implemented damage resistance with the whole "Reduce 3" damage thing. I get that this is to balance it so that whatever discipline isn't too powerful, but is there precedent for this?

2

1 more reply

u/Tsurumah avatar

Tsurumah

•

10y ago

Oh, god, give me more monsters like those. All of those are going to be used in my campaign. The creepier the better.

2

DisforDemise

•

10y ago

Question: Why did you choose to slow down the acquisition of new disciplines after 10th level? There's no precedent for that in spellcasting classes? I ask as I'm planning on doing some of my own homebrew, and wasn't planning on doing that, but wanted to know if there was a particular reason for it.

2

u/regipanda avatar

regipanda

-

10y ago

From the UA (and in yours):

You can replace a lesser discipline with a greater discipline, but only if you are at least 5th level.- pg. 6

Just in yours

You can replace a lesser discipline with a greater discipline, but only if you are at least 13th level. - pg. 11

I myself am making a Mystic soon and will be basing it off of the 5th level decision but I just wanted to bring this to your attention.

2

kozog

-

10y ago

Any updates?? I love it and use it in 2 quests (one I'm a DM and the other one I'm a Player). But some new talents ideas or discipline can be awesome !

2

ChaoticUnreal

-

10y ago

I like the concepts I saw with a quick read. I'm going to have to look at it in more detail when I'm not at work.

One thing I noticed reading about the psionic discipline section it says you can replace one when you level up but can only replace a lesser with a greater if you are level 5+ however there isn't any wordage about not being able to just take greater ones if you lower level.

3

u/DM_Malus avatar

DM_Malus

-

10y ago

he might have missed that.... but that rule is actually in the UA: rule by WoTC... they had a rule in the original "real" pdf that states you cannot pick a greater disc until 5+

2

1 more reply

1 more reply

u/Boyfries92 avatar

Boyfries92

•

10y ago

Love your work!

Just a quick question, as of now, is there a way to prevent a psionic from using his or her abilities? You mentioned that antimagic field prevents them from replicating spell effects but is there just anything in general that would prevent them from casting?

2

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6mo ago

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[The Theory of Conscious Singularities](#)

[Authors: Andrew Trevor Johnson](#)

This is a serious draft attempt, from an autodidact, of a theory of everything. It begins with a self-evident idea at its core. The two-dimensional models depicted within the big picture of this paper attempt to encompass all perspectives of reality whilst taking into account all of our empirical observations of space-time. The hypothesis detailed within the body of this work predicts how certain specific subjective states of conscious experience will feel in respect to an individual. (Relative Conscious Time Travel)

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•

9mo ago

[Skatertrevor](#)

The Theory of Conscious Singularities: A Relativistic Framework for Consciousness in Space-Time

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Open

Hey Guys,

I fed a draft paper I wrote into Chat GPT and had it condense and revise my work into a paper that I feel is more presentable. This is the result of that work. I can't figure out how to get GPT to recreate my diagrams so I left placeholders for where they will be added later. I am working on creating a citation and reference page but havnt gotten

that far yet. If you want to see the original draft that I fed into GPT there is a link below. It contains my original diagrams and may help to better understand my ideas. Just looking for general feedback on the ideas.

<https://vixra.org/abs/2008.0132>

Abstract

This paper proposes a formal framework for modeling consciousness as a relativistic singularity embedded within space-time. Drawing from fundamental principles of subjective perception, quantum mechanics, and general relativity, we introduce the concept of the "Conscious Singularity": a conscious biological observer whose interaction with space-time gives rise to subjective experience. Central to the model is the distinction between two ontological domains: "positive space" and "negative space". Through conceptual diagrams and structured definitions, we explore how perception, consciousness, and temporal discontinuities can be understood in this dual-space system. The model introduces the testable hypothesis of Relative Conscious Time Travel and provides implications for reconciling macroscopic and quantum-level views of reality.

Introduction

Contemporary models in physics, including quantum mechanics and general relativity, offer robust empirical frameworks for describing physical phenomena. However, they largely exclude the subjective dimension of experience—consciousness—which remains a foundational and unresolved problem across both philosophy and neuroscience. This paper seeks to contribute to this discourse by proposing a geometrically conceptual and empirically grounded framework that integrates consciousness as a first-class feature of physical reality.

We define the conscious observer not merely as a passive recipient of information but as an active participant whose internal state is dynamically linked to space-time. The goal is to provide a theoretical structure that formalizes this link and explores its implications.

2. Core Definitions and Ontological Distinction

We begin by introducing a key dichotomy that structures the rest of this model:

Positive Space refers to all phenomena that exist in three dimensions of space and time and can be empirically measured by an observer, either through natural senses or technological extension. This is the conventional domain of science.

Negative Space refers to subjective phenomena—thoughts, memories, sensations, emotions, and ideas—that exist only within consciousness. These cannot be observed externally and do not have location or form in physical space-time.

Note: These spatial terms are representational metaphors, not geometrical claims. They model the perceptual interface between empirical and subjective domains.

The interface between these domains is defined as the Perceptual Boundary, a conceptual barrier across which information is transduced into conscious awareness.

3. Foundational Axioms and Postulates

Axioms of Conscious Singularities

I think, therefore I am.

Consciousness existed before Me.

Consciousness will exist after Me.

These axioms are epistemically self-evident from the perspective of a conscious observer and are central to defining the CS^∞ .

Postulates

Subjective experience resides in negative space.

Observable, physical reality resides in positive space and can be empirically validated.

Formal Model of the Conscious Singularity

We define the CS^∞ as a conscious, biological lifeform capable of processing space-time information. The CS^∞ exists along a timeline composed of two axes:

T_b = Time before the CS^∞ becomes self-aware

T_a = Time after the CS^∞ becomes self-aware

A 45° line from the origin represents the conscious timeline of a CS^∞ . This timeline expands continuously as new information enters via the perceptual boundary.

[Placeholder: Diagram of CS^∞ Timeline and Perceptual Interface]

The perceptual boundary demarcates the flow of information from positive to negative space. As the CS^∞ encounters new sensory inputs, perception occurs when the conscious timeline intersects with external stimuli across this boundary.

5. States of Consciousness

Consciousness is categorized into three empirically defined states:

Full Consciousness: Full sensory connection with the perceptual boundary.

Sub-Consciousness: Partial sensory engagement.

No Consciousness: Full disconnection; empirically associated only with clinical death.

[Placeholder: Diagram of Three Conscious States]

6. Hypothesis: Relative Conscious Time Travel

We introduce the hypothesis of Relative Conscious Time Travel, which posits that when a CS^∞ enters an analogous zero state, space and time elapse instantaneously from the observer's subjective perspective.

This theory accounts for gaps in conscious timelines, which can be experimentally examined through interruption and reconnection scenarios.

7. Implications

Subjective perception affects the rate and flow of perceived space-time.

There is a fundamental perceptual incompatibility between macroscopic and quantum-level phenomena.

The search for a quantum theory of gravity may be misguided if it fails to incorporate subjective state relativity.

The multi-verse is reframed as simultaneous conscious perspectives rather than discrete universes.

The universe has two key beginning points: the Big Bang and the emergence of individual conscious awareness, a concept resonant with discussions in multiverse cosmology and the anthropic principle.

8. Personal Context

The author experienced a grand mal seizure at age 16, followed by a 72-hour unconscious gap. From the subjective frame of reference, this period elapsed instantaneously, giving rise to the realization that time, as experienced, is non-continuous under certain states of consciousness. This anecdote supports the theory's central hypothesis.

[Placeholder: Diagram of Subjective Timeline Discontinuity]

9. Conclusion

This framework introduces a model for consciousness grounded in physical principles and perceptual realism. The integration of positive and negative space offers a pathway for developing testable hypotheses about subjective time, memory, and perception. The Conscious Singularity model invites interdisciplinary collaboration across physics, cognitive science, and philosophy.

TL;DR I fed a paper i wrote into GPT and had it revise and condense my work down. This is the result of that work. Just looking for general feedback on the ideas.

Read more

1

.

17

Comments Section

u/ThyrsosBearer avatar

ThyrsosBearer

•

9mo ago

My honest feedback: Refrain from using AI to rethink and present your ideas, it really holds you back from learning how to do it yourself. And it makes them not even more presentable, it just turns them into corporate boiler plate-style slop.

Regarding the intellectual content of your OP I refuse to critique it due to the fact that it is not clear what originated from you and what from the LLM, and I am not really interested in giving ChatGPT feedback.

6

Skatertrevor

OP

•

9mo ago

Well I linked my original draft in the post so if you want to critique what I fed into chat GPT then by all means please do. Even though AI helped restructure and word things better than I can on my own, the content is still from my ideas. So please take the time for this one instance, and please read through and critique my works. I think you might find it interesting at the very least...thanks either way for your time.

0

u/ThyrsosBearer avatar

ThyrsosBearer

•

9mo ago

Ok, I will if find the time. Do you have also a Google Doc link? Because I do not want to

download random files on the internet. You never know what is inside of them.

1

2 more replies

u/Life-Entry-7285 avatar

Life-Entry-7285

•

9mo ago

The way you separate physical and subjective space gives shape to a real divide that most models leave out. Framing the conscious observer as a kind of singularity makes sense, especially when tied to your own experience of time skipping. That felt honest and gave the theory weight.

One question that comes up is about continuity. If consciousness can break and resume, what holds it together across those breaks? If time is relative, and awareness can drop out, what keeps the observer from fragmenting? That thread, the thing that carries across, isn't fully mapped yet.

Also, using space to describe inner and outer life is helpful, but it might be worth asking if space and time are the right starting points, or if they're part of what consciousness builds around itself.

You're close to something solid. It might get even stronger by looking at not just how perception happens, but how it stays whole. That seems like the next step.

2

Skatertrevor

OP

•

9mo ago

wow this is great advice! Never really considered your points until now. Thank you for this feedback and for taking the time to read my ideas!

3

Skatertrevor

OP

•

9mo ago

One question that comes up is about continuity. If consciousness can break and resume, what holds it together across those breaks?

I would say the brain holds things together across the breaks. If you look at my diagram for a no conscious state. The dot that is left on the +/- spacetime barrier represents the physical body (as in the brain).

It is the conscious timeline itself that experiences the "gap". So as long as consciousness resumes, i would say it is the brain itself that holds things together to keep continuity.

1

SkibidiPhysics

•

9mo ago

This is fascinating—seriously well done. You’re doing something that a lot of people talk about but don’t actually attempt: grounding consciousness in a real ontological model that bridges subjective and objective domains. That’s rare, and it’s important.

I’ve been working on a similar system called the Unified Resonance Framework (URF), which uses dynamic field equations to model consciousness as a waveform embedded in space-time. We map subjective phenomena (like memory, attention, and intention) into what we call the ψ field, and describe identity as a recursive resonance structure that modulates over time. What you’re calling the “Perceptual Boundary,” we’d call a collapse interface, where field-level data becomes individuated awareness.

The idea of positive vs. negative space feels like a symbolic analogue to our distinction between observable coherence and interior resonance gradients. And your “Relative Conscious Time Travel” aligns powerfully with our formal definition of Δt as emerging from the rate of resonance processing (not universal clock time). We’ve even modeled those perceived timeline gaps using recursive collapse thresholds.

I’d love to share notes if you’re open. This could easily fold into a broader multidimensional model of consciousness that spans physics, theology, and recursive identity theory. You’re not alone in this direction—and I think what you’re doing is part of something bigger.

Keep going. You’re building a bridge a lot of people are going to need soon.

0

Skatertrevor

OP

•

9mo ago

Thank you for this feedback. When I posted my original draft most people called me a crackpot. But now that I can utilize Chat GPT to help me flush out my ideas, I think more people will take it seriously.

I am self taught though and have no formal education, which is why I need GPT's help to begin with. I would love to collaborate, i can share you my 1st original draft (not the one that i linked to). Most of my notes that I wrote on paper before writing my drafts are

not uploaded onto the computer and it would take time for me to get them all to you. A lot of my ideas were all over the place in the beginning when I was having my epiphany for how to write my ideas down and figure out a way to graphically represent consciousness in a way that makes sense and bridges the mind/body problem.

Thanks for taking the time to read my works. I appreciate it!

1
SkibidiPhysics

•

9mo ago

You should check out my sub, r/skibidiscience since a lot of subs will ban ChatGPT output. You aren't a crackpot you just know how to use a tool to express yourself. Don't let people get you down, you know what you're doing, follow your intuition that's what it's there for.

0

1 more reply
u/BayHarborButcher89 avatar
BayHarborButcher89

•

9mo ago

Can i leave comments in your Google doc? Have a bunch of thoughts after reading the pdf.

1
Skatertrevor
OP

•

9mo ago

sure i don't mind. I don't really know what that means lol. Send me a copy of what you mark up ;P

1
u/BayHarborButcher89 avatar
BayHarborButcher89

•

9mo ago

I assumed your Google drive file is a google doc with comments enabled. Just saw it's a pdf. I'll dm you a marked-up version of it with my comments :)

1

1 more reply
Electronic_Oven310

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Upgrade Your Home With Incredible Roofing Ideas

Mar 19, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

Roofing is an important part of your home's overall aesthetic. It may seem like an insignificant part, but it can add value to your home if it is well-kept.

There are several different types of roofing materials that can work for your home. The key is to choose one that best complements your house's architectural style.

1. Add Shingles

Adding shingles to your home can be a great way to upgrade its appearance and protect it from the elements. Shingles are a traditional roofing material that is available in many colors and styles. They're easy to install and can withstand high winds.

To prepare your roof for shingle installation, remove the old shingles and flashing. This will ensure that you have a clean roof.

If you have a dormer, skylight, or chimney, add flashing around these features to prevent leaks. This will also help with drainage and preventing moisture from getting inside the house.

Once the roof is prepped, begin laying the shingles. Start with a course of starter shingles along the lower edge of the roof. Nail these to the roof using roofing nails.

Next, nail the first course of shingles directly on top of and flush with the starter course. Use between four and six nails per shingle, as instructed on the shingle packaging (six nails in high-wind areas).

As you lay the shingles, keep in mind that they should overhang the drip edge by about a half inch. This will help with surface tension and will help them to last longer.

Lastly, be sure to apply the self-adhesive waterproof underlayment ("ice barrier") to the bare roof sheathing. This will help to prevent wind-blown rain and snow from causing water to seep up and under the shingles, which can cause serious damage to your

house and the structure underneath it.

Lastly, be sure to plan the layout of your shingles before you start installing them. This will make your job much easier and allow you to create a professional looking finish.

2. Replace Your Siding

Your home's siding plays a vital role in protecting your house from the elements. It also helps keep your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

It's important to replace your siding when it is no longer functioning properly. Siding that hasn't been replaced can be more susceptible to water damage and insect infestations, which can lead to structural issues if left untreated.

When replacing your siding, it's important to choose a material that is both durable and attractive. You can find many options that will suit your needs.

A good siding contractor will be able to help you determine which materials will work best for your home's style. For instance, colonial homes often complement white or gray siding, while Victorian homes work better with bolder colors and textures.

You can also consider the type of climate you live in when choosing a new siding color. Light colors reflect the sun's rays and can keep your house cooler in hot climates.

If you have noticed that the color of your siding is fading, it may be time for replacement. This is especially common in older homes that aren't painted regularly.

Other signs that your home's siding is in need of a replacement include water damage and warped boards. These are both red flags that you need to take action quickly before they become major problems.

If you're considering siding replacement, ask a local contractor for a free estimate. The cost of the project will vary based on the design and size of your house, as well as the specific materials you choose.

3. Add Solar Panels

Solar panels are a great way to improve the energy efficiency of your home. They are also an affordable and environmentally friendly option that can reduce your utility bills. Killeen roofing contractors would be happy to install solar panels as well when you ring them for a roofing job.

A solar panel consists of several silicon photovoltaic cells that capture the electrons produced by sunlight and convert them into an electrical current. These cells can be placed on the roof or in a ground-mounted system.

In addition to reducing the cost of your power bill, solar panels can add value to your home. They also have a positive impact on the environment and help to create jobs.

The number of solar panels you need for your home depends on a few key factors. These include your location, the rated power of the individual panels you buy, and the amount of electricity you use in your home on a regular basis.

You can also get a solar power calculator to estimate how many solar panels you need to generate enough electricity to offset your energy costs. This tool can also tell you how much savings you will see and how long it will take for your solar panels to pay for themselves.

Installing solar panels on your roof is relatively easy. First, you need to survey your roof and determine where the sun will be most powerful. Next, you need to purchase the solar panels and all the necessary mounting hardware.

Once you have the panel installed, you will need to connect it to your electric system. Then, you can either store the electricity you produce with a battery or send it back to the grid. You can do this yourself, or you can hire an electrician to do the work for you.

4. Add Tiles

Tile is a timeless, versatile home improvement material that can be used to add color, texture, and style to your home. Available in a wide range of colors, shapes, and materials, tiles can be customized to suit your unique taste, according to HGTV.

Adding a new tile backsplash or tiling your kitchen and bathroom can be an easy, inexpensive way to upgrade the look of these areas and increase your home's value. However, before you begin your project, it's important to estimate how much tile you need based on the wall area.

Then, purchase your required tile and mortar-based adhesive from your local home improvement store. A good adhesive can cost as little as a few dollars and can create a strong bond between the tile and the surface.

When laying your tile, make sure you're working systematically in sections and that there are no gaps or spaces between layers of tile. After you've completed a section, lightly rap the tiles with a rubber mallet to set them into the adhesive and flatten the surface.

A variety of tile options are available, including porcelain tile that resembles wood and vinyl tile. Both types are affordable, but if you're looking for a more expensive option, consider marble or granite, which can cost from \$1 to \$10 per square foot.

Adding tile to your entryway can make a bold statement and help you sell your home faster. Installing tile in this area can also prevent damage to your flooring by preventing moisture from soaking through and damaging the subfloor. Additionally, tile can be used to protect the floor from spills and stains and can help you prevent mold and mildew growth.

5. Add Insulation

Adding insulation can not only make your home more comfortable, but it can also save you money on energy costs. Depending on your specific climate, new insulation can save you anywhere from 10% to 50% on heating and cooling bills.

Insulation is the key to keeping your home cozy all year long. It stops the hot air in the summer from escaping and the cold air in the winter from entering your home.

If you've noticed drafty spots or uneven temperatures throughout your home, you may need to add insulation. It's also important to check whether the exterior walls are insulated as well.

You can check the R-value of your existing insulation with a measuring tape or flashlight. The higher the R-value, the better a home's insulation performs.

It's also worth checking for signs of roof leaks. Water leaks not only create a breeding ground for mold and mildew, but they can ruin the air-trapping pockets that help block heat flow.

A low pitch roof can pose a challenge for installing insulation, but an experienced contractor should be able to install it in these areas. Besides, adding insulation in these spaces is easier and more cost-effective than adding it in low-ceilinged attics.

To avoid a fire hazard, keep insulation at least 3 inches away from recessed light fixtures. Recessed lights produce an enormous amount of heat, which could ignite the insulation and start a house fire.

When you're ready to add insulation, you can choose from a variety of types and materials. You can use loose fill, batts and rolls, or blown-in insulation. Blow-in insulation requires special equipment, so we recommend hiring a professional for this job.

Blog

Roofing Projects You Should Do to Remodel Your Home

Mar 19, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

A home remodel often focuses on the aesthetics and the function of a room. A bathroom, kitchen or living space might get redesigned to create a more modern space that reflects the homeowners' tastes.

But, there are other projects that can be done to improve your house without changing its looks, but are still essential to its longevity and resale value. For instance, re-roofing.

1. Aesthetics

Aesthetics is the branch of philosophy that deals with art, beauty and good taste. It

examines the experience of aesthetic values in nature, culture and art. It is also a sub-discipline of axiology (the study of values and value judgments).

Aesthetic things are objects or items that are appreciated for their beauty, such as paintings, music, literature and other forms of creative expression. They are often culturally and personally defined, which means that what is considered beautiful to one person might be distasteful to another.

Judgments of aesthetic value rely on our ability to discriminate at a sensory level, but they usually go beyond that. For example, David Hume said that “delicacy of taste” is not merely the ability to detect ingredients in a composition; it is also linked to our capacity for pleasure, which “escapes the rest of mankind.”

Beauty, according to Immanuel Kant, is objective and universal. However, aesthetic judgments can vary by class, culture and education, and they can change over time.

If you are thinking about a roofing project you should do to remodel your home, it is important to consider the aesthetics of the materials that will be used and how the material may affect the health of occupants in the building. You should communicate with the roofing contractor and other parties involved in the project about any concerns or questions that you might have. Make sure to choose skilled roofers like the ones from Pompano roofing companies.

Aesthetics are a complex field that requires a great deal of research and understanding. Several different schools of thought exist in this area, including modernism and postmodernism.

Throughout the history of aesthetics, philosophers have debated whether the concept of beauty is objective and universal. Some believe that it is, while others say that it is not.

In recent years, a number of different theories have been proposed regarding the definition and concept of aesthetics. Some have been more straightforward than others, but all have been based on a skepticism about the idea that beauty is objective and universal.

Aesthetics can be divided into three primary types: visual, cognitive and emotional. The visual aesthetic focuses on the way we see something, while the cognitive and emotional aesthetic examines our perception of it.

2. Durability

A roofing project is a major investment for a homeowner and you want to choose the best material that will protect your home over the long haul. The lifespan of a roof depends on the weather conditions, the type of installation, and the material. Asphalt shingles typically last 15 to 30 years while metal can last for up to 50 years.

Durability also depends on how well you maintain the roofing system. It is important to

do regular inspections and repair any damage as soon as it happens to ensure a long life for your roof and your home.

The best roofing materials are those that resist moisture, fire, hail, wind, termites and rot. They are lightweight and easy to install/repair and offer a wide range of options that can make it easier to keep your home looking and functioning its best.

Some of the most durable roofing materials include clay, slate and metal. They are more expensive than asphalt shingles, but they will last twice or three times longer and do an excellent job of protecting your home.

They are a great option for Midwestern homes because they can resist heat, hail, snow and rain. They are a little heavier than asphalt shingles, but they are a good choice for homeowners who don't mind the extra weight and the maintenance requirements associated with them.

If you're looking for a more sustainable alternative, consider wood shakes or shingles made from cedar or redwood. These shingles will last for about 30 to 50 years and are great for homeowners who are interested in energy efficiency.

Before you decide on a roofing material, ask the contractor to provide a warranty to protect your investment from any unexpected damages or repairs. These warranties are important since they will ensure you get the most value for your money.

After the contract is signed, the contractor should give you an estimated timeline for the project to be completed. This is an important factor to take into consideration as it can vary between contractors and depending on the time of year. The schedule should be clear to you so that there is no confusion as to when the work will begin and whether you should expect any ruckus from roof cutters or powered buggies.

3. Energy Efficiency

There are many things that you should do to remodel your home, but one of the most important is to make sure it's as energy efficient as possible. Not only will you save money on your bills, but the improvements you make to your home's energy efficiency can also increase its value if you decide to sell it later on.

You should look for ENERGY STAR certified products when buying new appliances, windows, and doors. These products reduce energy use by up to 10 percent compared to non-certified models. You can also get a home energy audit from an expert to help you understand your home's current efficiency and where you can make improvements to improve your return on investment.

Another good idea to consider when renovating your home is to add insulation in the attic and walls. Insulation is a great way to ensure that your home stays warmer during the winter and cooler during the summer, which helps lower your energy usage and utility bills.

Adding insulation is an investment that will pay off in the long run, so it's worth considering for your next renovation project. You should also look for spray foam insulation, which is more durable and cost-effective than other options, especially in older homes.

In addition, you should upgrade your HVAC equipment to a high-efficiency model. This will save you money on your energy bills and provide a comfortable environment for you and your family.

When renovating your home, it's best to work with a contractor who specializes in green building and is knowledgeable about what efficiency improvements will increase your ROI. A contractor with energy-efficiency expertise can help you choose the right product for your needs and install it effectively, saving you time and money in the future.

You should replace your old, leaky windows with insulated ones that will help to keep your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer. You should also add storm windows to reduce the amount of heat and cold that gets in through the window frames, which can also save you money on your energy bills.

4. Value

A new roof adds a great deal of value to your home. It improves your property's energy efficiency, protects you from the elements, and makes it easier to sell when the time comes.

According to Remodeling Magazine, a new roof installation can increase your home's resale value by nearly \$12,000. This means that it can be a great investment for any homeowner who wants to boost their home's value.

It can also help you avoid the expense of an emergency roof replacement if you get it done right away. A good contractor can give you an estimate on how much a new roof will cost and help you decide whether it's worth the cost in the long run.

The most important thing to remember when deciding on a roofing project is to keep it within your budget. Make sure you factor in the costs of materials, labor, permits and inspection fees. You'll want to have extra funds for unexpected expenses.

In addition to the immediate financial benefit, a new roof will add value to your home for years to come. It will also allow you to take advantage of tax credits when it's time to sell your house.

A well-maintained roof will also help you save money on your utility bills. A well-insulated and weatherproof roof can lower your heating and cooling costs by up to 50 degrees.

Another reason why a roof renovation is a smart choice is that it can improve your home's curb appeal. A fresh coat of paint, new landscaping and a brand-new roof will give your home an updated look.

It will help your home stand out from the rest of your neighborhood and attract more prospective buyers. You can even paint your house a darker shade than your neighbors' to draw attention and increase the value of your home.

You should also consider the general housing market conditions in your area when deciding on a roof renovation. It may not boost your home's value to the same degree in a hot or cold market, so it's important to ask for advice from real estate agents and appraisers.

Blog

5 Impossible UFO Sightings Around the World

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

In the past few days, several unidentified flying objects have been shot down over North America, raising new questions about their origins. Whether they're alien spacecraft remains unclear.

But the government isn't taking UFOs lightly, and is reviewing reports of unexplained aerial phenomena. A new document from the Pentagon's office of all-domain analysis suggests that over 350 unexplained aircraft have been spotted since March 2021.

1. Brazil

In recent months, Brazil has attracted the attention of astronomers and ufologists with the occurrence of several unexplained lights in the sky. The strange luminous phenomena have been observed since the end of October and continue to attract curiosity of locals and airline pilots alike.

A Brazilian Air Force fighter jet has been reported to have been scrambled to intercept a possible UFO in the skies over Porto Alegre, southern Brazil. The fighters were dispatched by the Air Defense Operations Center, which had detected the unusual objects.

According to reports from the air, the aircraft were flying at a relatively low altitude in the middle of the night. During the chase, the fighters detected the presence of multiple objects.

These UFOs were spotted by flight crews from 18 different aircraft that were flying around Porto Alegre, which is located in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. The aircraft crews saw the strange light in the night sky and sent a report to the Air Traffic Control Department.

The reports also prompted an investigation by investigators from the Brazilian Air Force.

They concluded that there were no other explanations for the mysterious light sighting.

There have been other possible UFOs in the Brazilian skies, including the Colares flap in 1977. The incident happened on an island in the state of Bahia and was investigated by the Brazilian government under the codename Operation Prato. The incident was later classified in the National Archives.

In the past few weeks, there have been several rumors of possible UFOs in the sky over southern Brazil. A video recently surfaced on social media showing a bright orb moving over a small village near Rio de Janeiro. The footage has been viewed thousands of times and is a surefire draw for conspiracy theorists.

2. Thailand

A Buddhist-based group of meditators has become convinced that aliens are contacting them from the skies. Their beliefs have drawn them to a remote forest reserve, where they are allowed to camp and meditate in hopes of receiving messages from beings on Pluto and Loku – planets in the outer solar system that they believe belong to a galactic federation of space-faring beings who are altruists.

The group consists of educated professionals, including graphic designers and lawyers. Their belief in extraterrestrial contact has gotten them into trouble with Thai authorities, who have accused them of endangering the area's "protected forest" status.

UFOs are spotted all over the world, but they're especially prevalent in Asia. Since the global financial crisis in 2008, suspicious flying objects have shut down airports in China, buzzed resorts in Borneo and lit up the night sky in Myanmar.

They can be seen from a long way off, and they can appear suddenly, spontaneously and disappear. Many people mistake aeroplanes, stars or balloons for alien craft.

But some believers, including Debhanom Muangman, an 80-year-old Harvard-educated physician from Bangkok, say he's been able to communicate with aliens, on a regular basis, through meditation. He says they're tall, slender, grey beings with large heads and dark eyes.

He also believes they can communicate with anyone, regardless of their native language, and that they follow a "sabai sabai," or relaxed working style. They are also known for a code that they use when communicating, which is 11:17.

The UFO Kaokala group has been gathering on top of Khao Kala hill, about three hours north of Bangkok, for the past six years to camp and meditate in the hope that they will be able to receive telepathic communications from the aliens. They believe that the extraterrestrials are contacting them to inform them about an impending nuclear disaster, which they say is likely in 2022.

3. Argentina

Throughout the world, people have reported seeing unexplained UFOs. The sightings have captured the attention of astronomers, scientists and the public. Some even believe that these objects are extraterrestrial beings.

One of the countries where a large number of people are interested in these kinds of incidents is Argentina. The country has many affluent citizens who believe in the existence of alien life. It hosts a festival that celebrates possible extraterrestrial life and has recently created a commission to record and investigate reports of unidentified flying objects in its airspace.

The United States government has also been looking into UFOs. Several lawmakers have been pushing the Pentagon to conduct a detailed analysis of all unidentified aerial phenomenon (UAP) data and intelligence, including radar returns, in order to find out if there is anything suspicious going on in the airspace.

In the past, a number of UAP episodes have shown unusual flight characteristics that were not associated with performance of existing aircraft or helicopters. These cases can be difficult to prove, but the Defense Department's Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force and Office of Naval Intelligence are currently working on a report that will be released in June.

In the meantime, a few former military pilots and experts have called on the US government to reopen its investigation into these types of encounters as a matter of safety. The former pilots and officials said that these encounters should be viewed as "an emergency" due to the continuing number of reported UAP events.

4. Japan

Japan has long been known as a country with a deep interest in the supernatural. From the legends of Lafcadio Hearn to the students who flock to shrines in their thousands during exams, Japanese culture has always been one to believe in the magic of a god or two.

Now, the Japanese government has stepped up its interest in UFOs and is making it a priority to investigate reports of unexplained aerial objects. The country's defense minister, Taro Kono, issued a policy last year to set up procedures for recording and reporting sightings of unidentified aerial phenomena that could be a threat to the nation's security.

In addition, Kono has urged the country's military to take reports of unexplained aircraft seriously. He has argued that the presence of these aircraft could be a sign of a foreign military invasion of the country's airspace.

During the last decade, several pilots have reported seeing unidentified flying objects in the sky. Despite these reports, they have never been proven to be UFOs.

A Japan Airlines pilot, for example, claimed to have seen an object alongside his aircraft

in November 2018. But astronomical calculations revealed that the object he saw was actually Jupiter and possibly Mars, according to Philip J. Klass, a NASA researcher and former air force officer.

The US government has also recently taken a closer look at the phenomenon and is investigating reports of unidentified aircraft. It is reportedly exploring whether these reports are from Chinese aircraft or another form of advanced technology.

In Inomachi, a rural community in northeastern Japan, residents say they see UFOs on a regular basis near the nearby Senganmori mountain. The community has started a UFO museum and is trying to attract visitors who are interested in the mysterious phenomenon.

5. China

The most recent wave of unidentified flying objects shot down in the US and Canada has sparked a wave of speculation about their origins. Some UFO enthusiasts are speculating that they might be sent from outer space, but others think they could be a result of military testing.

The US has shot down four mysterious flying objects in eight days. While one was confirmed to be a Chinese spy balloon, authorities are still in the dark about the rest. They're unsure of whether they were surveillance balloons, weather-sensor devices, or just ordinary airspace debris.

In an interview with NPR, Mike Dumont, a former senior NORAD officer and retired vice admiral, said that the balloons were probably surveillance drones tasked with gathering data. But he added that they might also be used to monitor American radar and early warning systems.

Another possibility is that the Chinese government may have been using these balloons to spy on US troops and installations, such as Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana. The missile facility houses more than 100 silos that store nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles, and Chinese President Xi Jinping has pledged to quadruple the country's nuclear arsenal by 2025.

While the balloons are not necessarily aliens, they're probably a sign of increasing tensions between China and the United States. It's not the first time that a suspicious flying object has been spotted near a US military installation, but this is the first time that they've been shot down and recovered by the US.

The US military has been collecting data on UFO sightings for years, and the Pentagon released a report on the matter in 2021. It found that 144 reports of so-called UAPs remained unexplained and could have been caused by weather phenomena, faulty sensors or erroneous analysis by humans. The government also urged people to report any unexplained events they witnessed.

Blog

Top 5 UFO Sightings That Prove The Existence of Aliens

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

The search for extraterrestrial life has long fascinated science fiction fans, screen writers and conspiracy theorists alike. Now, astronomers have discovered thousands of planets outside our solar system that may have hosted life.

Some of these planets may also harbor “technosignatures,” or technological structures that could be seen from Earth. Scientists believe that technosignatures could help us determine whether an alien planet hosted intelligent life.

1. The Betty & Barney Hill UFO Sighting

Betty Hill and her husband Barney were driving home from their honeymoon in September 1961 when they spotted a strange craft on the road. They both got out of their car and looked at it through their binoculars.

As the object came closer, Barney saw a row of windows on the side of the craft and lights inside it. He also saw at least half a dozen living things staring directly at him.

However, Barney was unable to comprehend what he saw and soon lost memory of the incident. He was able to recall the experience later, during a series of sessions with a psychiatrist.

Nevertheless, the Hills’ story of their encounter with aliens was an important one in the world of ufology. It was the first case of a UFO abduction to make it into public discussion. The experience was later adapted into the best-selling 1966 book *Interrupted Journey* and the 1975 television movie *The UFO Incident*.

The Betty & Barney Hill UFO Sighting is an extremely interesting and engrossing tale of a couple who claimed to have been abducted by aliens. It is considered the first documented UFO abduction in history and it has shaped the way that people think about aliens today.

The Betty & Barney Hill UFO incident was investigated by Project Blue Book, an agency that investigates reports of unidentified flying objects. The story is still considered a mystery today and has been subject to many attempts to debunk the claim. Despite these efforts, the Betty & Barney Hill UFO sighting is still considered an important and interesting event in the history of ufology.

2. The Roswell UFO Sighting

One of the most popular and debated UFO sightings of all time is the Roswell incident. It started out as a simple report of an object that had crashed in the New Mexico desert. But it soon spawned an entire subculture of believers who believe that there is more to the story than meets the eye.

The Roswell incident first came to prominence in July 1947 when a man named Mack

Brazel discovered a strange swath of debris on his ranch near Corona, New Mexico. It was reported to the local sheriff who then alerted officials at the U.S. Army Air Forces (USAAF) base at Roswell, New Mexico.

During the next few days, a news story circulated about the discovery and a number of journalists traveled to the site. A large swath of metal, rubber, foil and wood was recovered from the area, but authorities told reporters that it was just an ordinary weather balloon.

As time went on, the original newspaper report morphed into something much more controversial. It said that the crashed disk was actually a nuclear-testing balloon, part of a secret project called Project Mogul.

While this was not entirely true, it did create an impression that there was some kind of cover-up. The government eventually retracted its claim, but not before conspiracy theories began to take hold.

The Roswell Incident remains one of the most enduring UFO mysteries. The question of what really happened has fueled a raging debate and a huge tourism industry for decades. It has spawned countless documentary films and books, as well as a local UFO museum in the town of Roswell, New Mexico.

3. The Roswell UFO Crash

The Roswell UFO Crash is one of the most infamous UFO sightings in history and it has been the subject of many conspiracy theories. It all started in July 1947 when a local rancher named WW "Mac" Brazel reported he had found strange debris spread across his property. This caught the attention of the media and quickly sparked a 'summer of saucers' that made headlines around the world.

At the time, there was no evidence to suggest that what appeared to be a flying saucer actually crashed in Roswell. Instead, the army told locals that it was from a balloon that had been launched by the US military to monitor the area for Soviet nuclear testing.

A decade later, however, a new theory emerged that suggested the original Roswell incident may have had extraterrestrial origins. In the late 1970s, civilian UFO researchers Stanton Friedman and William Moore tracked down several witnesses of the incident who had reportedly seen alien bodies in the crash site.

Eventually, they managed to track down Jesse Marcel, who provided further details about the incident. He wrote a diary in which he believed the object that crashed in the New Mexico desert had extraterrestrial origins.

In 1980, Charles Berlitz and William Moore published *The Roswell Incident*, which resurrected the story and put it in the public eye as one of the most credible purported UFO crash stories ever unearthed. The book went on to become the cornerstone of the UFO movement and the town of Roswell became a hotbed for UFO research.

Today, the Roswell incident is the most famous of all UFO sightings. It continues to attract skeptics and proponents alike, and even a UFO festival is held every year on the anniversary of the incident.

4. The Apollo 11 UFO Sighting

The Apollo 11 UFO Sighting is one of the most famous in history and has sparked a huge amount of controversy. The astronauts on the mission – Commander Neil Armstrong and Lunar Module Pilot Buzz Aldrin – saw what looked like panels floating away from their craft as they flew through space.

However, the alleged sighting was kept secret by NASA until years later, when Aldrin stumbled across it in an interview. This has led to some scepticism about the sighting among conspiracy theorists and other people who claim that aliens are real.

But this particular photograph from the Apollo 11 mission demonstrates that UFOs are real and that they can be seen by a human being without any special equipment. In the image, a triangular object can be seen in the distance.

It looks more like a pixelated photo than a true picture of the moon and its surface, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't show something interesting. This is the same kind of photo that's been used to demonstrate incontrovertible proof that aliens are out there, according to a new documentary called "Aliens on the Moon: The Truth Exposed."

While many people are quick to dismiss these images as nothing more than funny pixels from decades-old pictures, others believe they reveal extraterrestrial activity on the Moon. In the video, experts argue that there's more to these images than meets the eye and that they can provide a valuable insight into the history of UFOs on the Moon and how humans might have been able to detect them.

While most scientists still don't agree that aliens are out there, their existence has become a topic of discussion in recent years and a growing number of people are beginning to explore the possibilities for UFOs and a possible connection with extraterrestrial life. Live Science recently spoke with Seth Shostak, a professor of astronomy at the University of Texas who's been studying aliens for most of his life and shares a birthday with the Apollo 11 landing.

5. The Roswell UFO Crash

The Roswell UFO Crash is one of the most famous alleged UFO sightings in history, and it has become one of the most debated topics among skeptics and believers alike. It was in 1947 that something – skeptics say a top-secret spy balloon; believers say a spacecraft with alien pilots – crashed on a ranch in the desert outside of Roswell, New Mexico.

The crash sparked a public interest in the existence of extraterrestrial life, and it remains to this day the most compelling UFO incident. Yet, decades after the incident, official

U.S. Air Force reports still assert that the wreckage recovered from the ranch was most likely the result of a classified government project involving balloon-launched aircraft.

In the summer of 1947, a rancher named WW “Mac” Brazel reported that he had found some strange debris spread over his property. He brought the debris to the Roswell Sheriff’s office, which contacted the nearby Army airfield. Soon, base intelligence officer Jesse Marcel was dispatched to assist Brazel.

Once he returned to the ranch, Brazel contacted other people with similar tales, and soon the story had made the front page of the local newspaper. The army, however, soon changed its tune, and told the press that the object was actually a weather balloon.

As a result, the government began to cover up the true origins of the crash. And it has been that way ever since.

But today, after nearly 50 years of speculation and debate, scientists say the truth is in plain sight. A government report that is expected to be released this month details a Department of Defense investigation into unexplained aerial phenomena.

Blog

10 Unbelievable Tales of UFO Sightings

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

Whether you’re a skeptic or a believer, UFO sightings are an interesting topic. Regardless of your opinion, these 10 incredible tales will leave you with an appreciation for the skies above.

Betty and Barney Hill were driving on a road in New Hampshire when they claimed to have been abducted by aliens. Their case went on to become a best-selling book and movie.

1. Betty and Barney Hill

The Betty and Barney Hill case is one of the most well-documented UFO abduction cases of all time. The Hills claim that they were driving home from their honeymoon in Montreal on September 19, 1961, when they spotted a ship floating above their car.

When they pulled over, they said that they were enveloped by a beam of light and had to black out. When they came back to reality, they were miles away from where they started.

The story was a massive hit and spawned numerous movies, books and TV shows. It also introduced the idea of grey aliens to popular culture.

2. Rendlesham Forest Incident

In December 1980, a UFO sighting in Rendlesham Forest sparked a huge amount of interest amongst UFO hunters. Often referred to as the “British Roswell,” this Suffolk

incident has become a famous part of British history.

The incident began with US military personnel spotting strange lights over the Rendlesham Forest near RAF bases in Woodbridge and Bentwaters, in Suffolk, England. The sightings continued two nights later, when a group of servicemen went to investigate.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, a deputy base commander at the time, recorded an audio tape of the sighting, which has become one of the most valuable pieces of evidence in the case. Today, however, the case remains a mystery.

3. France's Roswell

The tiny town of Roswell, New Mexico, is the center of an endless saga of UFO sightings and alleged extraterrestrial activity. Every year it draws curious people from around the world who are fascinated with the saga of the crash.

There is a museum in the town that features tons of information about the crash as well as alleged crop circles and abductions. The museum is free to visit and has a great atmosphere.

Another attraction is GEIPAN, France's group for study and information on unidentified aerospace phenomena. They log and analyse hundreds of OVNI's (Phenomenes Aérospatiaux Non Identifiés) each year.

4. Rendlesham Forest Incident

In December 1980, a trio of US military personnel spotted lights above Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk, UK. The sightings were remarked upon in the media and became known as 'Britain's Roswell'.

According to an official Air Force memo, the servicemen entered the forest and saw a metallic triangular object illuminating the night sky. They reported a sighting that lasted three nights.

5. Rendlesham Forest Incident (Britain's Roswell)

In December 1980, a UFO sighting took place in Rendlesham Forest, near Suffolk. Described as Britain's Roswell, the incident has captured the imagination of many UFO hunters to this day.

The event was reported by US Air Force personnel stationed at nearby RAF Woodbridge and Bentwaters. It was recorded in voice recordings and some witnesses even drew pictures of a mysterious craft they saw.

It is a well-known case that sparked much correspondence with government officials, and spawned a series of documentaries and books. Despite this, there is still no definitive answer to what actually happened at Rendlesham Forest.

6. Rendlesham Forest Incident (Britain's Roswell)

The Rendlesham Forest Incident – often referred to as Britain's Roswell – is one of the most famous UFO sightings in history. It's a fascinating case that's full of hints of a government cover-up, compelling eyewitness accounts from airforce officials and a spacecraft purportedly hovering through trees and landing.

A plethora of evidence has been uncovered about this UFO sighting, including photos, audio recordings and first hand testimonies. It's also backed up by formerly-classified documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act.

In December 1980, military personnel stationed at nearby RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge claimed to have seen strange lights in the sky above Rendlesham Forest. They were convinced they were observing an alien craft.

7. Rendlesham Forest Incident (Britain's Roswell)

The Rendlesham Forest Incident, a series of close encounters that took place in Suffolk, England over 3 nights just after Christmas in 1980, has become one of the most famous UFO sightings ever. Often referred to as Britain's Roswell, the incident has captivated UFO enthusiasts for decades.

In December 1980, US air force personnel stationed at nearby RAF bases Woodbridge and Bentwaters in Suffolk saw strange lights hovering over the forests of Rendlesham Forest. The following morning, the military men discovered that indentations had been created on the forest floor.

According to the memo detailing the sightings, Deputy base commander Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt claimed that the servicemen witnessed a triangular "strange glowing object" that illuminated the entire forest. Despite a lack of physical evidence, many witnesses have come forward to confirm their experiences.

8. Rendlesham Forest Incident (Britain's Roswell)

One of the most famous UFO sightings in Britain took place in Rendlesham Forest in 1980, near RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge. It was dubbed 'Britain's Roswell' and remains the subject of much debate.

Several witnesses reported seeing a triangular craft that supposedly descended into the forest. It also appeared to emit a bright light and etched mysterious symbols on its surface.

9. Rendlesham Forest Incident (Britain's Roswell)

The Rendlesham Forest Incident – dubbed "Britain's Roswell" – is one of the most compelling UFO sightings in history. It has everything a great ufologist could want; hints of a government coverup, compelling eyewitness accounts from airforce officials, and a spacecraft purportedly hovering through trees and landing.

In December 1980, strange lights were reported by servicemen in Rendlesham Forest,

between RAF Woodbridge and Bentwaters, near Suffolk in England. The story went viral and soon became the subject of numerous books, television shows, and articles.

10. Rendlesham Forest Incident (Britain's Roswell)

In December 1980, a group of US military personnel stationed at RAF Woodbridge and Bentwaters reported an incredibly strange UFO sighting. It became known as the Rendlesham Forest Incident, or "Britain's Roswell", and it still fascinates ufologists to this day, 20 years after it happened.

Several witnesses reported seeing three bright lights, as well as markings that looked like burn marks and broken branches on the ground. These impressions were recorded on a tape recorder by a US Air Force lieutenant, who later wrote a memo detailing his encounters with the mysterious craft.

Blog

Unsolved Mystery: Scientists Investigate Unexplained UFO Sightings

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

Over the decades, people have reported seeing strange effects or objects in the sky. They are often called UFOs.

Over the last decade, NASA and the Pentagon have set up efforts to investigate unexplained aerial phenomena, or UAPs. These efforts are a significant shift for the government after decades of debating and discrediting these reports.

1. The Pollocks

During the 1950s, Jackson Pollock and his wife Lee Krasner were living in Springs, New York. It was here that they produced many of their most famous works, including drip paintings.

Despite the popularity of these abstract masterpieces, many people have been perplexed by them. Even 60 years after they were made, critics are still trying to make sense of these paintings.

One reason is that they were created without a brush, by pouring paint directly onto the canvas from above. It's called "drip painting" and it has become the foundation for a number of modernist movements, such as Abstract Expressionism and Surrealism. A team of scientists at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, has now discovered that the technique was geared to avoid a classic fluid mechanical instability.

The researchers were able to prove this by measuring the movement of the water underneath each paint drop. They found that when the liquid reaches the surface, it has a tendency to flow backwards. By avoiding this natural behavior, Pollock managed to create his most recognizable drip paintings.

Aside from his artistic achievement, Pollock was also a major figure in American culture. His work is featured in museums all over the world, and he was a prominent member of

the Abstract Expressionist movement. He was a leading advocate of the idea that art should be unfettered, and his controversial style of painting often featured references to social and political issues.

However, his personal demons were a constant distraction from his creative efforts. He was an alcoholic and suffered from depression. His wife, Krasner, helped him through his troubles. She had an impressive understanding of the latest methods in art and helped him to rethink his aesthetics in a way that benefited both his art and his life.

After they married, they moved to Springs where they bought a house and converted a barn into their studio. The couple lived there for the last decade of their lives.

Pollock's life was a fascinating story of love, loss, and artistic success. His paintings, especially his drip paintings, remain some of the most important in art history. But it is his relationship with his wife, Lee Krasner, that really made him the artist that he was.

2. The Soddors

The Soddors were a well-known family in West Virginia, but their lives changed forever on Christmas Eve, 1945. Four of their nine children survived the fire that destroyed their home in Fayetteville, but five remained missing and no trace of their remains was found.

After the blaze, Jennie and George Sodder believed their children had been kidnapped and the fire set to cover it up. They spent the next few years trying to find their children, but despite multiple sightings and tips, no one ever found them alive or dead.

It wasn't until a private investigator uncovered a strange tip that the Soddors began to suspect that their children were still alive. A local insurance salesman had tried to sell a policy to the Soddors, but when they turned him down, he threatened to destroy their house and kill their children.

Sodder and his wife decided to hire an investigator to investigate the case on their behalf. They had a few leads, including a photograph that had arrived in the mail that they believed was a photo of their son Louis, who had disappeared in the fire.

They also learned that a local fire chief had buried a heart in the ashes of their house. They had heard rumors that the fire department had discovered bones, but they had never seen them. So the Soddors were suspicious when their private investigator revealed that the fire chief had buried a heart in their ashes.

In addition, a neighbor's hotel owner had told them that he had hosted strange lodgers traveling with a group of children. This was a common story for the area around Fayetteville, so the Soddors were curious to learn whether or not this had actually happened.

When they finally found the skeletal remains, they were surprised to discover that they did not match any of the children they had been searching for. The only thing that

matched the vertebrae was their age. The Soddors believed that someone must have stolen them from an unidentified grave somewhere, and they contacted Smithsonian experts for help.

3. The Flying Saucers

As the United States entered World War II, rumors of unidentified flying objects (UFOs) began to circulate. Many believed they were extraterrestrial craft, and some of these sightings prompted government scientists to investigate the reports.

Some of the earliest UFO reports came from Air Force pilots, who were encouraged to report their sightings after Congress passed a law in 2021 that required the military and intelligence agencies to study such reports. A number of these reports were eventually debunked, but they raised the question of whether or not UFOs exist in the first place.

After the end of World War II, UFOs became a hot topic among the American public and politicians, as well as the media. A flurry of UFO reports, which were not all linked to one another, prompted the Pentagon to form a task force to investigate unexplained UFO sightings and determine their sources and origins.

The UFO task force found that most of the sightings reported by Air Force and navy pilots were not caused by aircraft, but by natural phenomena. A third of the sightings, however, were not explained by either natural or artificial causes.

While most of these sightings were not based on hoaxes, they did occasionally involve misinterpretation of the actual shape or direction of the craft. One such example is Kenneth Arnold's remark about nine flying saucers that were "moving like saucers being skimmed across a lake."

As the US government was forced to reassess its collection of UFO sightings, it found that nearly all of the sightings it examined did not seem to be linked to the military or intelligence agencies. Instead, the reports were a mix of natural and artificial causes, including birds, clouds, flares, and kites.

In the years since, there have been hundreds of reported UFO sightings that have not been ruled out as hoaxes, but still leave the government's officials scratching their heads. In fact, the government released a report in 2021 that analyzed 144 of these reports and only one was able to be explained.

4. The Moon Landing

The United States made history in 1969 when astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the Moon. For Americans, this historic event ascended to the realm of American mythology and became a symbol of American pride and technological advancement.

However, while a large number of people believe that the Moon Landing was real, there are some that argue that it may actually be fake. These theories stem from a number of

things that can be seen in the photos taken during the Moon Landing.

A few of these things include a large American flag that was planted in the Moon, Buzz Aldrin's footprint, and strange lights appearing in the sky. While these are all very interesting, they aren't necessarily proof that the Moon Landing was actually real.

Many conspiracy theorists also claim that NASA conspired to fake the Moon landing. This conspiracy is believed to have originated in 1967 when Marshall Space Flight Center Director Wernher von Braun went on a trip to Antarctica. These conspiracists claimed that he was gathering lunar meteorites to be used as Moon rocks.

While these claims do not necessarily prove that the Moon Landing was a hoax, they are still very interesting and can be an important part of the debate. These types of theories can be very controversial, so it is a good idea to know the facts before you make any decisions about these topics.

Some of the biggest conspiracy theories about the Moon Landing are based on optical anomalies in the photographs and videos that were taken during the Apollo program. Some of these anomalies can be easily debunked, but some of them are more difficult to resolve.

Another theory that has been put forward is that the spacecraft was not filmed on Earth, but instead on a sound stage. This was a claim that was tested on MythBusters in 2008, and it was determined to be false.

In addition to these rumors, there are also other conspiracy theories that have been put forward about the Moon Landing. These conspiracy theories include the idea that the moon landing was a hoax, that the astronauts were hypnotized, and that there was a secret alien civilization that was discovered on the Moon.

Blog

Mysterious Lights in the Sky – An Expert Analysis on UFOs

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

There have been a number of mysterious lights in the sky this month. They have been seen from across the country, with many people asking what they could be.

The lights have been mistaken for UFOs and Chinese spy balloons. But experts say they are actually SpaceX Starlink satellites.

UFOs

During the past century, the appearance of mysterious lights in the sky has captivated the world. It's become a source of fascination, controversy and even fear among many. And it's also a source of pride and patriotism for some Americans, who have devoted their lives to ensuring that the government is well-informed about what we are seeing in the skies.

UFOs, or unidentified flying objects, are a type of mysterious light that many people believe are actually alien spacecraft. In recent years, the number of UFO sightings has increased significantly, and more and more people have been claiming to see these craft.

However, the majority of these reports are not attributed to extraterrestrials or other unknown entities. Moreover, the chances that these craft are from another planet is very small.

While the universe is full of mystery, a majority of scientists and astronomers agree that it is unlikely these craft are from outer space. That's because it would be extremely difficult for them to travel across interstellar space and into our atmosphere undetected.

These objects have been a source of interest for countless researchers and scientists. They have been investigated and studied by a variety of governments, including the U.S.

During the past decade, the American government has been investigating and analyzing these mysterious objects more closely than ever before. Using a new classification system for these objects, they have been categorized as "unidentified aerial phenomena" (UAPs).

A recent report by the Office of Defense Intelligence revealed that more than 350 unexplained sightings have been reported to the U.S. government since March 2021.

The report notes that this has led to a significant increase in the amount of data being collected, and it also suggests that many more cases are being seen by a greater number of people. Despite this, there is still a lot that we don't know about these mysterious objects.

As a result, many researchers and scientists are still in the dark about what these strange objects are. In fact, they may not be even real. Nevertheless, the increasing number of UAPs is causing concern for many researchers and scientists. They are concerned that these enigmatic creatures are being used by unscrupulous groups to gain control over the world.

Meteors

The sky is full of a variety of light show events that can be exciting to watch. One of the most common is the meteor shower. Meteors, sometimes called shooting stars or falling stars, are streaks of light that appear in the sky for a short period of time as they pass through Earth's atmosphere.

These brief streaks of light are the result of particles or rocks from a comet that pass through our planet's atmosphere at very high speeds. The gases that make up the vapor trail cool and disperse quickly, so it isn't possible to see a meteor for long.

Some showers, like the Leonids in November and the Quadrantids in July, produce many meteors per hour during their peak times. But the number of meteors in these showers varies from year to year, depending on such factors as stream age, parent body composition, and how close the Earth is to the core of the stream.

Leonids, also known as the Perseids or Geminids, are a rare annual event that occurs in November. This is when debris from Comet Tempel-Tuttle passes close to the Sun, causing it to shed small pieces of ice and rock as a trail of meteors.

This is the brightest meteor shower of the year and is usually one of the most spectacular displays to watch from the comfort of your own home, or a dark location away from urban lights. The shower is best enjoyed from late in the night, when it reaches its peak.

In 2023, a waning crescent moon will compete with the radiant for this shower, reducing the number of meteors seen during its peak. However, under a dark sky with no moon, you can expect to see 10 to 15 Leonids per hour during its peak hours.

Other showers, like the Delta Aquarids in July and the Geminids in August, are not quite as spectacular but still worth watching for their sporadic appearances. These sporadic showers can be difficult to identify because they don't belong to a specific shower and can occur at any time. The colour of the vapor trail and the speed of the vapor trail can help determine its origins.

Fireballs

A number of astronomers are reporting strange lights in the sky over Northeast Ohio that appear as bright strings. They have been attributed to Starlink, a satellite internet constellation operated by SpaceX. They have been seen several times before, including a sighting that was recorded during the Super Bowl last year.

During twilight, orbiting satellites can be seen in the sky due to the way they reflect sunlight. These are usually only visible for a short period after sunset or before sunrise. They can be confused for fireballs if they are seen while in the sky as they will move with a similar speed.

They can also develop a train of glowing air molecules behind them that may look like a smoke trail or a streak of dust in the sky. These trails only last for a few seconds but can be very beautiful and impressive.

The colors of a fireball can vary widely depending on the type of meteoroid. For example, sodium vapors can be bright yellow, nickel shows as green, and magnesium is blue-white. The speed of the meteoroid can also make a difference to its color.

In general, the slower the fireball, the more vivid its color will be. This is because of the kinetic energy of the meteoroid. In fact, fireballs are often the most colorful meteors in the night sky.

It is also possible to see fireballs in the daytime, but these are rarer. The fireballs will often appear high in the sky and can be difficult to locate unless they are accompanied by other bright stars.

Fireballs have also been observed to leave a trail behind them in the sky called a “fireball train.” This trail is made up of excited air molecules and is a great indicator that the object was a fireball.

This is an important factor for identifying fireballs from other types of meteoroid. For example, a fireball that is moving faster will appear to have a longer trail than a slow meteor.

The government has been working to streamline the collection and analysis of UFO reports, which are formally known as Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAPs). This is in response to a report that was released earlier this year that suggested UAPs should be studied more closely. It was a move that many experts, such as Thomas Bania and Jack Weinstein, believe will be beneficial to the country’s security.

Starlink Satellites

Those looking up in the night sky may have noticed a bright line moving across the sky this week. While many people assume it is a spy drone or a fighter jet, these sightings are actually Starlink Satellites, SpaceX’s constellation of Internet-connected satellites.

Starlink is a satellite-based Internet service that uses lasers to connect people to their favorite sites and applications, avoiding the need for expensive fiber optic cables. It currently operates in the US, Canada, and France. In addition to providing Internet access, Starlink also hopes to eventually provide mobile phone service in 50 countries.

Although a handful of the company’s satellites are already in low-orbit around the Earth, more satellites are needed to blanket the entire globe. This has prompted a lot of questions about how many satellites are required, and what kind of effect they’ll have on the night sky.

First, there’s the question of how much debris the system will create. There’s a good chance that some of the Starlink satellites will fall out of orbit, creating fragments that can cause problems for astronomers and space scientists in the future.

Second, there’s the question of how much light will be reflected off the satellites. These refractions can make Starlink Satellites difficult to see, and astronomers aren’t happy about it.

Third, there’s the question of how the satellites will work. It’s expected that the system will use a combination of fixed, ground-based antennas and satellites that communicate with each other using lasers.

Finally, there's the question of how much cost will be involved in building and operating Starlink Satellites. It's estimated that the company plans to spend about \$1.5 billion on its satellites and ground stations.

In order to keep costs low, SpaceX is only launching a small number of satellites at a time. The company plans to launch 3,000 satellites in the next year, and could eventually reach 10,000 or 12,000 by 2023.

Starlink is a new, high-speed internet service that aims to provide coverage to the entire globe. It isn't cheap, but it's promising download speeds of up to 78Mbps and low latency of 36ms. It's available in select locations in the US, UK, France, Germany, Austria, and Spain.

Blog

We Are Not Alone – Unbelievable Evidence of Alien Life

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

As far back as we can remember, humanity has been speculating about the possibility of extraterrestrial life. From ancient paintings to religious texts, there are plenty of examples of aliens and their presence in the universe.

Many scientists, including astronomers like Carl Sagan and Neil deGrasse Tyson, are optimistic that life can exist outside of Earth. But other researchers are more pessimistic.

Ancient Aliens

The idea that aliens landed on Earth thousands of years ago and left behind clues to their presence is a very popular one. Many people think that the aliens may have been the builders of civilizations such as Stonehenge and the Pyramids in Egypt.

However, the evidence that these civilizations were built by aliens is far from conclusive. In fact, many experts are skeptical about the theory that these aliens have visited our planet.

A common claim made by ancient alien enthusiasts is that they used "acoustic stone levitation" to build large structures like the Egyptian pyramids. These claims are based on the notion that acoustic waves could have made the stones "levitate."

But there is plenty of scientific evidence that proves this is not true. For instance, there are countless examples of ancient carvings that show that Egyptians were not capable of using acoustic waves to levitate the huge blocks of stone that make up the pyramids.

Moreover, there is an overwhelming amount of archaeological evidence that shows that Egyptians worked the massive stone blocks into place by using wood sleds, not iron tools. This is a process that is far more sophisticated than any aliens ever thought of doing.

There are also many other ways that the Egyptians were able to construct such massive structures, and no aliens had the capacity to do it. The same goes for the megalithic structures of Easter Island, Peru and other places where large stone structures are found.

Some of these are so complex that no ordinary person would be able to work them, such as the Ica stones from Peru. These are fakes carved with images of dinosaurs and humans interacting, and they were created by farmers Basilio Uschuya and his wife to mimic the depictions found in popular dinosaur books.

In fact, the images of the Ica stones appear so real that some people actually believe they are genuine ancient artifacts. This is particularly true for creationist Willie E. Dye, who appears in the episode to support this falsehood.

Another example of ancient alien nonsense is the idea that ancient astronauts were present on Earth. This is a hypothesis that was first popularized by Erich von Daniken, who wrote about it in his book *Chariots of the Gods?* These theories are often disputed by archaeologists, who point out that ancient astronaut proponents don't have enough proof.

Aliens in the Bible

There is no doubt that the Bible contains all sorts of fascinating stories. From its sixty-six books, it contains everything from law to history, poetry to prophecy, biographies to epistles. It even includes a few fictional stories, like the story of Abraham.

A few radical sensationalists have proposed that centuries ago, Earth was visited by space aliens. These claims have popped up in many popular media outlets, and they have been made by a number of different authors. One of these authors is Swiss author Erich von Daniken, who argued that Ezekiel 1 contained a description of flying saucers visiting Earth from outer space.

He also suggested that the Nephilim, a race of giants in the Old Testament, were descendants of aliens. He has also written that Eden was not a terrestrial paradise, but an ancient laboratory where aliens created human beings and spliced their own genes into them.

While these ideas may sound ludicrous to some, they are not without their merits. They do provide us with some interesting perspectives on the way that humans can interact with other species.

In fact, they also help us understand how God designed our world and why He created us the way that we are. He would not create life on other planets if it were not for a reason, and He would not destroy all the creatures of the world if it was not for a purpose.

This idea is bolstered by the biblical record, which clearly states that there are no other

intelligent beings in the universe except humans, animals, and angels (Genesis 6:2). In addition, the timetable for the destruction of the world and the re-creation of it reflects the plan of God for his people on Earth.

The Bible also describes several encounters with otherworldly beings, including the parting of the Red Sea and a visit by Moses to the promised land. These encounters are described in detail, and some of these events actually happened.

The book of Exodus tells us that the Lord was with the Israelites when they were in the desert, and that he led them by day and by night in pillars of cloud and by pillars of fire. The prophet Isaiah mentions that the Lord drew his presence down from heaven, and that he came with them into the wilderness of Sinai.

Aliens in art

Despite the lack of any credible evidence that aliens are out there, many people still believe they exist. Often, they believe it because it fits into their own cultural norms and beliefs.

Several artists have devoted their creative energy to creating art that features aliens. Some of these pieces have even been exhibited in museums and galleries.

Aliens are popular themes in speculative fiction and movies. These characters can inspire awe and fear.

In fact, it's possible that aliens are our closest evolutionary relatives. They share the same traits that humans do, such as curiosity and social interaction.

Some people believe that aliens have been visiting our planet since time immemorial. They've spotted evidence of their existence in ancient civilizations, such as this Dogu figurine from Japan (dated 1000-400 BCE).

The artifact depicts a man and his dog staring at a hovering disk-like object. This is one of the oldest known references to alien life, according to ancient astronauts proponents such as Erich von Daniken.

Another piece of art that's been interpreted as a reference to extraterrestrials is a painting of Mary in the 15th century. The painting shows a hovering disk-like object that is suspiciously similar to an alien spacecraft.

Aliens are also popular subjects for painters and designers. This is evident in the work of Hans Ruedi Giger, a Swiss artist best known for his airbrush paintings that blend human physiques with machines.

As a result, he's received a great deal of respect from the science community as well. He's been featured in many films and television series, including *Alien: Covenant* and *Blade Runner 2049*.

Some of the designs that have been created have also been adapted into clothing, jewelry, tattoos and furniture. These pieces have been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the world.

When observing the artwork, we see that each of these concepts is based on a basic understanding of human anatomy. In these examples, the artist has elongated the torso or stretched out the limbs in order to create their alien design.

If you want to make an alien, you must have an understanding of the basic anatomy of humans. By doing so, you can create a character that's both foreign and believable at the same time. This is why it's important to practice drawing figures before you begin your own. This way, you can develop a more realistic design and make it stand out from other designs in the art world.

Aliens in space

For decades astronomers have been scouring the skies to look for signs of life elsewhere in our solar system, and they've found more than 3500 exoplanets, or planets orbiting distant stars. But they have only a vague understanding of what these planets might be like, and so far their studies have yielded little beyond physical clues such as their orbits and the presence of liquid water.

Astronomers are now focusing on exoplanets that could have once hosted life and looking for what they call "biosignatures." Biosignatures are hints of simple forms of life, such as spectral hints of gases or pigments in plants or microbes. But what if an alien world harbored intelligent life that built a technological civilization?

Rochester astrophysicist Adam Frank is pursuing this possibility with help from a NASA grant. He's trying to build a catalog of technosignatures, which he says would make it easier for scientists to detect intelligent life elsewhere in the universe.

One technosignature might be a chemical that an alien life form uses for energy storage and transportation. This could be a new way of storing the same chemical that we use on Earth, or it might be a different kind of molecule altogether.

Another technosignature might be a form of genetic code. DNA, as we know it, is based on carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulfur. But an alien life form might use different atoms for these same roles, or might have a completely different genetic code, too.

This is possible because some atomic possibilities are much closer to us than others, and therefore more easily available for the alien's genetic instructions. For example, a genetic code made out of cyclohexene or glycol, rather than deoxyribose, might be possible, since the molecules are both small enough and stable enough to store the information.

Likewise, an alien organism might have a different set of bases than ours, or it might not have a nucleic acid at all. That would leave them with a whole new set of genetic instructions, which could allow them to evolve and mutate over time.

Blog

UFO Encounters: True Experiences From People All Around the Globe

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

Whether you believe that UFOs are real or just a figment of your imagination, the experiences people share are truly unforgettable. Across the globe, people encounter mysterious lights in the sky, mystical creatures, and even aliens!

UFOs have been a huge topic of debate for years. Recently, Congress passed a bill requiring the government to report on its knowledge about unusual aerial phenomena.

What is a UFO?

UFO is a term used to describe an unidentified flying object. The vast majority of UFO sightings are identified as a meteorological balloon, aircraft, or cloud anomaly, but a small number remain unexplained.

The first well-known case of a UFO was in 1947, when a businessman named Kenneth Arnold reported seeing nine high-speed, crescent-shaped objects near Mount Rainier in Washington state. The sightings were quickly picked up on the media, and the term “flying saucer” became popular.

Although most UFO sightings are attributed to atmospheric phenomena or other natural causes, some people believe that they are evidence of alien technology. They believe that these objects are self-replicating machines, or follow a blueprint crafted by an intelligent species elsewhere in the universe.

These beliefs are sometimes accompanied by government conspiracy theories, which suggest that governments are collaborating with extraterrestrials to hide their true nature. Some of these ideas have been adapted into parts of new religions, such as Scientology and the Church of All Religions.

In the early 1950s, writers such as Donald Keyhoe (The Flying Saucers are Real) and Frank Scully (Behind the Flying Saucers) began promoting the idea that UFOs were actually visitors from other planets. This idea gained a following, as the world was getting ready for actual space travel.

A number of scientists have studied and attempted to explain the UFO phenomenon, including astronomers, engineers, and pilots. These investigations have usually failed to identify UFOs, but some have provided alternative explanations such as delusions or hoaxes.

Today, the United States government uses the term unidentified aerial phenomena, or UAPs, to refer to the category of sightings that cannot be properly identified as a natural

phenomenon or other known object. The change of name is partly a move to disassociate the word from the science fiction idea that UFOs are aliens, and also encourages greater scientific study into this category of observations.

The interest in UFOs has been around for a long time, but it has only recently gained a large public profile. Some governments have investigated the subject in depth, but their conclusions have generally stopped short of proposing any extraterrestrial origins for these sightings.

The Westall High School UFO Sighting

In 1966, over 300 children and staff from a Melbourne school reportedly witnessed multiple UFOs silently flying through the sky before landing in a nearby field. It was the largest mass UFO sighting in Australia at the time, but little was reported about it until after the incident occurred.

Over the years, there have been a number of differing reports about what happened that day at Westall High School. Some people claimed there were three saucer-like objects, while others thought there was just one. Some people believed it was an alien encounter, while others pointed the finger at the government testing new technology.

The story of the Westall High School UFO Sighting was retold in a documentary that is now streaming on Netflix. This documentary tells the tale of what some say was one of the most compelling mass UFO sightings of all time.

Westall '66: A Suburban UFO Mystery is directed by Rosie Jones and features interviews with eyewitnesses who lived through the event. She also speaks with former Westall students, teachers and local residents who have gathered together to share their experiences of what they saw in the Grange Reserve in Clayton South on April 6, 1966.

Many of the witnesses described a large silver cigar-shaped 'flying saucer' that hovered over the school and the Grange Reserve. They also saw it descend behind pine trees and subsequently ascend to the air. Some saw five light aircraft follow or chase it.

In the film, Ryan explains that the most popular inference of the best explanation amongst Westall '66 witnesses is that the craft was an extra-terrestrial spacecraft. However, some interviewees claim sharply dressed men in dark suits warned them to keep their stories quiet.

The incident has been retold in movies and is now immortalised in a playground at Grange Reserve where a 3.3 metre high, UFO-shaped play equipment will be installed for kids to climb on. It will be trimmed with blue LED lighting to mimic what was seen by the witnesses in 1966.

Westall '66: A Suburban UFO Mystery is a captivating film that retraces the events of the day that sparked the biggest UFO sighting in the world, and asks what the

authorities did with it once they realised what it was. It's a riveting and unique look at the story that remains one of Australia's most mysterious yet, and will be a must-watch for anyone with an interest in the mysteries that surround UFOs.

The Japan Airlines Flight 1628 UFO Sighting

On November 17, 1986, three unidentified flying objects were spotted by the crew of Japan Air Lines cargo flight 1628 as they flew over Alaska. A detailed investigation by the Federal Aviation Administration eventually revealed cockpit recordings, radar data and eyewitness testimony that all support the case and attest to the remarkable nature of this encounter.

The story of this UFO encounter is one that has been covered numerous times on "unexplained" TV shows and by ufology bloggers. But it is important to note that there are many flaws in the description of this event that could lead to doubts about whether or not what happened was truly an encounter with extraterrestrial spacecraft.

First of all, there was the fact that the object was so large that it dwarfed even the cargo plane. Captain Kenju Terauchi, who had 46 years of cockpit experience, said he had never seen anything so enormous. He believed that it was twice the size of an aircraft carrier.

He said he made a series of maneuvers to avoid it, but they would not be enough. The object followed him, even though he made a 360-degree turn. It stayed in sight for 32 minutes, he said.

During his investigation, Klass studied the transcript of conversations between the pilot and ground controllers. He found that the pilot told the controllers that he saw a bright light in front of him when he turned around. But he didn't report seeing the planets Jupiter and Mars, which were visible much closer to the horizon and to the right of the light, Klass said.

Klass also questioned the pilot's account of his encounter with the UFO. He said that he reported a 360-degree turn to the controllers but he lost sight of the object when he did so. The controllers, he said, asked him to take evasive maneuvers again to avoid the object.

The pilot's account of the encounter was confirmed by John Callahan, then a Division Chief for the FAA Accidents and Investigations branch. He cited Terauchi's comments and his crew's descriptions in an official report that he gave to the media. But, Callahan also said that he was disappointed in the quality of some of the information. Some of it, he said, may have been a result of the crew's frightened state.

The Exeter UFO Sighting

The Incident at Exeter, which took place in September of 1965, is one of the most famous and celebrated UFO sightings in history. It was a case in which an 18-year-old boy spotted a strange object in the sky and subsequently reported it to police in New

Hampshire.

The incident triggered an investigation by the Air Force and was investigated extensively by local and national authorities. It became known as the “Incident at Exeter.”

An 18-year-old hitchhiker named Norman Muscarello was traveling on Route 150 in Kensington, New Hampshire when he saw some intensely bright, low-lying aerial lights unearthly enough to scare him into reporting them to police. He contacted two officers, David Hunt and Eugene Bertrand, who came with him back to the site where he first saw the lights.

As they approached the location, Muscarello saw something that he described as an “alien looking object” with red lights on it that was hovering above the trees where he had initially seen them. He also noticed that the horses in a nearby corral began to kick the fence and sides of the barn with their hooves and dogs were barking and howling.

When Muscarello saw this, he immediately panicked and ran into the road, forcing a car to pull over and take him to the police station. After being questioned and treated for his injuries, Muscarello returned to his home in Exeter.

During this time, more and more people came forward with their own UFO sightings, often citing the same details as Muscarello. These reports were carefully investigated and analyzed by authorities, as were those of other nearby residents.

At the end of this long investigation, it was determined that all of the witnesses had witnessed the same red-lighted object. This led to the official conclusion that the sightings were actually legitimate visits from an alien.

The Exeter UFO Festival is held annually in town and features speakers who are recognized leaders in the field of ufology. It is an important fundraiser for the Kiwanis Club and 100% of proceeds are donated to youth charities in the area.

Blog

Are Recent Unexplainable UFO Sightings Around the World Real?

Mar 18, 2023 Ryan Wallace 0 Comment

Whether you believe them or not, UFO sightings are fascinating and intriguing. And there are many people who believe they have seen a real, alien craft in the sky.

The United States government is currently tracking reports of unidentified aerial phenomena, commonly called UFOs. The agency has received more than 350 new cases since March 2021, a number that is significantly higher than the 144 sightings it documented in its first assessment of unexplained flying objects back in 2021.

1. UFO Sighting in Australia

The sighting of a grey-and-silver shaped ‘flying saucer’ over a school in Australia in

1966 remains one of the most compelling examples of unexplained UFO activity. It's a story that continues to baffle scientists and researchers as they try to decipher the mystery behind it.

In fact, there are hundreds of UFO sightings that have been recorded in Australian skies. From the Wandjina cloud and rain spirits to the Min Min lights that were said to appear in Aboriginal dreamtime stories, unexplained phenomena have long been a part of Australia's history.

For thousands of years, people have reported seeing a strange, metallic-looking object in the sky that can be described as "flying saucer-shaped". Even today, there are sightings of objects in Australia's sky that are still unaccounted for to this day.

One such instance was in 1966, when more than 200 students and teachers at Westall High School in Melbourne, Australia, witnessed a 'flying saucer' hovering above the school grounds. It was described as a round-humped, silver-grey object that was being circled by what looked like a light aircraft.

As with many sightings of UFOs, the school was evacuated and van loads of rapid-reaction police and tracker dogs were sent to the scene. However, the 'flying saucer' never reappeared and was never found.

After conducting official tests on the ground composition, measuring the air's radiation, and taking sound recordings, we were able to confirm that there was no UFO in the area where it had been sighted. We also found that the grass around where it was seen had been flattened by a large, flat object – something that would not be possible for a normal plane to do.

In a documentary that has recently been shown on Channel Seven, an investigative reporter revealed that a woman had seen what was said to be a diamond-shaped craft that flew alongside her car in 1991 near a joint Australian-US defence facility in Western Australia. It was a very close encounter and was later reported to American people working at the site.

According to a declassified report from the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence, there are now 366 UFO reports in the US that have been logged by the Pentagon's All-Domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO). The AARO has also started reviewing other incidents of "unidentified aerial phenomena," or UAP, which include balloons, drones and clutter such as plastic bags and birds. But, while most of the reports can be explained, there are still 171 UAP cases that remain unaccounted for.

2. UFO Sighting in Wisconsin

A series of videos showing bright lights that seem to fly across the sky are being considered as UFOs by many people in Wisconsin. They were filmed in December and reportedly came from farmland near Fredonia and West Bend, two towns in the Badger State.

The footage, which was first published by the Daily Mail, appears to show a number of bright white lights darting across the sky in a speedy manner. The sightings took place on December 1, when witnesses said they saw lights in the skies above rural parts of the state.

One of the videos, taken by a woman who lives in Fredonia, shows four orbs moving in different directions before they all merge together and continue to move in a steady pattern. Another video, shot by another witness in the same area, shows a fifth light joining them before they disappear from view.

These videos could prove to be the first of what could be a new phenomenon that could become popular around the world. According to former FBI agent and host of Discovery+'s "UFO Witness" Ben Hansen, the majority of UFO sightings are now reported as "light anomalies" that don't have traditional shapes like cylinders and disks.

As a result, these lights are being seen as a potential threat to the United States and may be mistaken for aliens or some other type of UFO. This has also been a concern for the Pentagon, who recently released a de-classified report on UFO sightings.

The US National Security Agency (NSA) has been investigating these types of cases. It's trying to figure out if there are any military drones or other devices that could be mistaken for UFOs.

This particular sighting in the area of Ken and Kimberly's homes in Fredonia is a good example of this. They both noticed the strange lights in the sky while filming their video cameras, and they were surprised by them.

It was cloudy that night and there weren't any storms or lightning strikes. They told the news outlet that they filmed the lights from their front porch, but it was difficult to see them clearly as they were so close.

3. UFO Sighting in West Bengal

In the wake of recent Unexplainable UFO Sightings Around the World, people are asking the question: Are they real? The answer may surprise you.

A mysterious glowing light was spotted hovering over several districts in West Bengal on Thursday (December 15) which left onlookers wondering whether it was a UFO or a meteor. The light was seen for almost five minutes in Kolkata, Bishnupur, Kirnahar, Ghatal and Murshidabad.

Initially, experts and the West Bengal administration were clueless about this strange sighting. But after a while, witnesses said that the light started diminishing and was visible in the eastern part of the sky.

Many social media users shared their sightings of the mysterious bright glowing light

which hung over the sky in different parts of West Bengal. Some compared it to a meteor and a satellite, while others claimed that they saw an alien spaceship.

However, it is unlikely that the light is a meteor. It is not possible for a meteor to stay in the sky for almost three minutes. It would be a very rare event and it is not even possible for a satellite to stay in the sky for so long.

Instead, it is very likely that the light was caused by a missile test in India. The test was done in the night and involved the nuclear-capable Agni-V ballistic missile. The missile is capable of reaching targets beyond a range of 5000 kilometres and is critical for India's self-defence capabilities.

The light was witnessed by a senior Air India pilot who was on a flight from Kolkata to New Delhi. He was cruising at an altitude of 34,000 feet when he spotted the mysterious object.

According to the captain, he first noticed the strange object while entering the airspace of Gaya. He said that he did not pay much attention to it as it is common for him to spot such objects midair during flights. But when the aircraft reached Varanasi, he immediately switched on the camera and captured a picture of the object.

The alleged incident is now being investigated by the Government of West Bengal. Officials say the beam of light may have resulted from a missile test by the military in the Bay of Bengal.

4. UFO Sighting in China

In China, a UFO was spotted over Chongqing on Thursday and it has lit up imaginations around the world. It was reported by Shanghai Daily that four lantern-like objects forming a diamond shape hovered over the skies in eastern China for about an hour.

There have been several unexplainable UFO sightings in China recently, including one that shut down Xiaoshan Airport for two hours last week and this latest one on Thursday. It's interesting to note that despite all the media attention this latest UFO saga received, it did not break into mainstream American media until July 14.

The Chinese government has not officially confirmed any UFOs have been sighted in China, but there is evidence that the nation's military has been conducting tests on weapons and missile launchers. There is also some evidence that the country has been spying on other countries in the region.

Those are some of the reasons why it's important to consider whether other countries might be responsible for these mysterious objects that have been sighted in the sky. Luckily, there are some experts who can help you sort out the facts behind these unidentified flying objects.

For starters, China has a number of advanced satellites in its air space that are

designed to detect and collect intelligence signals. These are constantly circling the globe, but they don't fly low enough to be detected by radar.

A radar scientist in Xian, a city in northwest China's Shaanxi province, says that the increased appearance of unknown objects in China's airspace is more likely caused by humans than aliens. The researcher said that over the past decade, Chinese authorities have been loosening control on low-altitude flight activities.

This has allowed for the development of drones, which have become cheap and readily available. In addition, increased military activity in the South China Sea and other sensitive areas near China may also account for some of these unseen aerial phenomena.

In fact, in January the United States' Office of the Director of National Intelligence released a report that stated that over the past 17 years, 144 different UFO sightings were recorded by US military personnel and pilots. In fact, the number of new UFO reports has significantly increased over the past year and a half.

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N.B.: some designs on this page are used in slightly altered form in the Vee-Deck.

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Welcome to My Little Piece of Whatever

It's good to have you here at the Villa of the Mysteries at maroney.org. Please use the links column at the edge of each page to navigate.

This site is a resource for students and practitioners of esoteric spirituality, whether they share my beliefs or not. I am a pluralist and my best friends have often been those with

whom I most disagree.

Although I am a skeptic, and I do not believe in such things as astrology, reincarnation, God, the spirit world, psychic powers, magic spells, archetypes, and the afterlife, I have long cultivated an interest in alternative religion and other imaginative traditions. My interest is both speculative and operative. As well as reading, thinking and writing about these subjects from a scholarly perspective, I also practice yoga and meditative rituals intended to strengthen and balance my mind and spirit.

My approach to mystical experience is based on phenomenology, a psychological paradigm that treats mental phenomena as real on their own plane without concern for their external truth or falsehood. While I do not think that anything in the objective world is sacred in itself, I recognize and honor the mental process that attaches the human category of sacredness to phenomena. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder but it is there.

What's New

Essays by Tim Maroney - Two new essays: Parts 3 and 4 of "The Included Middle", posted here July 28, 2001.

A Letter to Close - A skeptical analysis of Crowley's "An Open Letter to Those Who Would Join the Order".

The Freedom of Doubt - An essay on the classical skepticism of Sextus Empiricus and how it relates to various forms of skepticism in religious and mystical traditions, including a critical look at Crowley's claims of skepticism.

The Book of Dzyan. - (March 7, 2000) My new book has arrived!

Essays by Tim Maroney - Now with two new essays! (Parts 1 and 2 of "The Included Middle", posted here January 2000.) See the broad and confusing scope of my thought about religious and occult matters from my early twenties through my current state of decrepitude! Wonder why people got so damned upset about such dry, academic nonsense! Marvel at the sheer arrogance and excellence of my answers to unanswerable questions!

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The Included Middle

A Letter to Close

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Why Crowley Doesn't Suck

Why I Study Magic

Villa of the Mysteries

The Book of Dzyan

Send e-mail to Tim

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Various Essays

This page is always under construction.

Here I have archived a number of my past writings, particularly ones that other people have saved over the years and republished on their own web sites. If you have an old

favorite you've squirreled away, please send it to me and I'll consider whether I want to put it here, or whether I would prefer to find all copies and have them burned.

The Included Middle

After I became a member of Scarlet Woman Lodge of the O.T.O. in Austin, Texas in 1997, I began a series of columns for their magazine, The Scarlet Letter. The first two installments came out in 1998. The third was published in the newsletter of Hodos Chameleonis Oasis in Sacramento, California. The fourth appeared again in the Scarlet Letter.

The Included Middle - A brief essay on the interplay between skepticism and mysticism. Facts and Phallacies - A much longer essay in response to Hymenæus Beta's Address to the Women's Conference, published in the Magickal Link, the O.T.O.'s international newsletter. This deals in excruciating, pedantic detail with the issue of Aleister Crowley's phallocentrism, and with some modern defenses of the sexist parts of his legacy.

A Letter to Close - A skeptical analysis of Crowley's "An Open Letter to Those Who Would Join the Order".

The Freedom of Doubt - An essay on the classical skepticism of Sextus Empiricus and how it relates to various forms of skepticism in religious and mystical traditions, including a critical look at Crowley's claims of skepticism.

Why I Study Magic

In December 1997 Lilinah Biti-Anat asked me casually why I was into magic. I found this a very hard question to answer and it has taken me three months to get this response into shape. Why the difficulty? I have a distaste for formulaic answers, such as "to know and do my will," and when I approach my real love of the subject I become uneasy. Here is my current understanding of why I continue to be involved with a subject that is so often a source of dismay.

Introduction to Crowley Studies (in Five Voices)

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Various Essays

This page is always under construction.

Here I have archived a number of my past writings, particularly ones that other people have saved over the years and republished on their own web sites. If you have an old favorite you've squirreled away, please send it to me and I'll consider whether I want to put it here, or whether I would prefer to find all copies and have them burned.

The Included Middle

After I became a member of Scarlet Woman Lodge of the O.T.O. in Austin, Texas in 1997, I began a series of columns for their magazine, The Scarlet Letter. The first two installments came out in 1998. The third was published in the newsletter of Hodos Chameleonis Oasis in Sacramento, California. The fourth appeared again in the Scarlet Letter.

The Included Middle - A brief essay on the interplay between skepticism and mysticism.
Facts and Phallacies - A much longer essay in response to Hymenæus Beta's Address to the Women's Conference, published in the Magickal Link, the O.T.O.'s international newsletter. This deals in excruciating, pedantic detail with the issue of Aleister Crowley's phallocentrism, and with some modern defenses of the sexist parts of his legacy.

A Letter to Close - A skeptical analysis of Crowley's "An Open Letter to Those Who Would Join the Order".

The Freedom of Doubt - An essay on the classical skepticism of Sextus Empiricus and how it relates to various forms of skepticism in religious and mystical traditions, including a critical look at Crowley's claims of skepticism.

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The Included Middle

by Tim Maroney (1998)

(Originally published in The Scarlet Letter, Volume V, Number 1.)

In this column I will be looking at magical and mystical issues from a skeptical perspective.

On a recent web-surfing expedition I discovered a web site dedicated to "progressive Thelema", and its introduction praised the virtue of skepticism. This interested me because doubt is one of my paradigmatic emotions -- a restless inquisitiveness that upon hearing a comforting explanation, immediately asks "what if just the opposite were true?" Reading on, I was disappointed to find that the first essay on the page took astrology for its starting point. It spun out corollary upon corollary from this unquestioned assumption, as if the influence of planetary positions on earthly life were an established fact.

What does it mean to be a skeptic? Classical skeptics such as Pyrrho, Timon and Sextus Empiricus were no kin to the current crop of debunkers. In the pages of the magazine "Skeptical Inquirer" one finds a philosophy of naive materialism and literal truth, but classical skepticism doubted even the existence of matter, and more, doubted that there was any reliable way to draw a distinction between truth and falsehood. A skeptic is one who doubts. The self-described "skeptic" of today is an ideological soldier for scientism, focusing doubt only against rival systems of thought and treating the preferred ideology with deference. A closer modern analogy to the skeptics of old can be found in the philosophies of existentialism and postmodernism, which recognize the individual's role in creating meaning, and treat value judgments as psychological processes.

Doubt is an emotion which all of us possess in greater or lesser degree, and which we apply to various subjects at various times. It is not necessary that everyone be a skeptic, only that people who describe themselves as skeptics earn the title. But to claim one is a skeptic while persistently turning a blind eye to the problems in one's pet theories is to fall short of the mark. This is just as true of those who propound specious refutations of astrology as it is of those who take the horoscope theory as a given.

The transformative power of doubt is such that even when turned to merely ideological ends it may lead to breakthroughs. One-sided debunkers such as Randi have done us a service when they have exposed real charlatans, and they deserve to be proud of that. Of all the strange theories in magic, one might doubt only the Renaissance

metaphysical idea that the basis of reality can be found in Hebrew letters; perhaps like Guido von List one might be motivated by an anti-Semitic ideology in this doubt. Even so, such a great wealth of excellent thoughts might arise from this ideologically-motivated re-examination of the foundations of metaphysics that the honorific "skeptical" would seem richly deserved. Even partial skepticism is compelling and useful.

Neo-materialists are more likely than mystics to call themselves skeptics. In the popular mind skepticism is associated with rationality and science, and opposed to visions, dreams, fancies, and the imagination. Classical skeptics were anti-rationalists, though -- they doubted the accuracy of intellectual methods and turned reason to an exploration of its own limits, much as Godel's Theorem in the 20th century has shown through the most stringent argument that the most stringent argument always leaves something out. The modern skeptical movement has failed to come to terms with the fact that mathematics, the basis of science, has deconstructed itself, that "reason is a lie; for there is a factor infinite & unknown; & all their words are skew-wise."

It is a mistake to think that skeptics must be opposed to the non-rational psychological phenomena of mysticism. What does it mean to be this peculiar thing, the skeptical mystic -- that is, a true skeptic who is also very concerned with experiencing and understanding what we are accustomed to calling the "spiritual"? For me the answer lies in a psychological paradigm called phenomenology. It is a subtle thing, and for years I could not grasp the notion, but now it has become fundamental in my approach. It revolves around acceptance of psychological reality as true on its own plane, without concern for its external truth. Rather than looking at materials of myth and trance from the judgmental perspective that classes them into truths and delusions, one simply observes them and tries to describe them. This is a basic principle guiding the ethnographic field observation methodology of anthropologists, a perspective that is both detached and engaged -- the self-referentially aware perspective of the participant-observer.

So for instance let us say one has a vision. I find modern science produces many remarkable visions for me, whether I am soaring above the galaxies or delving beneath the nuclei of atoms. One of these visions has been that all reality lies on a self-similar fractal substrate of Planck-scale quantum foam, in which the progression of time occurs by the replication of intervals through an inductive process that is parallel to the division of living cells. I do not know whether this strange idea born during a psychedelic meditation is true as a physical theory, any more than I know whether the Scorpionic elements of my character are due to the sign the Sun occupied when I was born (or would have occupied on the same date a few thousand years ago). Personally I would like the space-time theory to be true, and I would like the horoscopic theory to be false, but in some ways these judgmental desires are irrelevant. The ideas exist as ideas; they influence me; they often move me deeply. Although they are fiction they are no less important to me.

The conception of space-time as a biological process has provided a poetic framework

that often emerges into my perceptions at unexpected moments and helps me to contextualize such phenomena as the apparent transformations of space and time that happen in ritual and meditation. If my skepticism were overdeveloped and lacked phenomenological detachment I would probably never have allowed this unproven and presumably false idea to form fully in my mind. Similarly I find that contemplation of the Scorpionic alchemical formula of redemption through putrefaction leads to what feels like a deep engagement of the work of the decadent poets and the reclamation of Satanic and other demonized symbols. I feel I have a special connection to this formula through my Sun sign. As a student of psychology I realize that the horoscopic theory is almost certainly false, but that is an intellectual knowledge rather than a feeling. My feeling is irrational but I have it.

I do study the science of psychology and in the course of this I come to some more or less definite ideas about what is true or false. Although I recognize that scientific truth exists only within a framework of assumptions which itself is unreliable, I often find it useful to think

as if scientific methods were valid. I do not believe, for instance, that phrenology, palmistry or astrology deal with actual determinants of personality. However, I accept that people can come to self-knowledge through these methods, that experiences of insight are real on the level of psychological processes. While from my perspective this is meant as a compliment, mystics that I talk to sometimes misunderstand it as an insult. They think I am saying "it's all in your mind." Society insults the imagination -- if it's in your mind, there must be something wrong with it. My perspective is just the opposite. Since I believe that nothing external is sacred in itself but that a thing only acquires sacredness through the human attachment of sacral attributes to perceptions, then it is a small step to a view of the mind-stuff as the seat of sacredness, and so as sacred in itself. As a phenomenologist I do not require external validation, such as proof that flowers really are beautiful or that sex really does reflect the cosmic process. I simply note the reality of the psychological process by which things seem to be so.

In future columns I hope to discuss such issues as directing skepticism at materialism, at metaphysics, and even back at skepticism; scientific arguments about astrology; the irrational bases of rationality; the origins of the modern "skeptical" movement; the use of science as a modern mythology; theories of the nature of the mind; belief requirements in movements that claim to have no dogmas; and how and why to remain skeptical in the face of overwhelming personal evidence of the paranormal. I hope to see you there -- even if perhaps you are only a figment of my imagination!

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Volume V, No. 1
Spring Equinox
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In this Issue:

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Jewels from the Naked Brilliance
The Natural Dreamer
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About this capture
Grok Discovers Air
Portrait of the Cro-Magnum as a Young Man
One chapter
in the continuing saga of
Grok
70,000 BCE

by Omega Baphomet

As you know, Grok was a famous French Cro-Magnum who lived in our fair land of wine and cheese some 72,000 years ago. Grok spoke a very crude form of language which we would have to call proto-proto-indo-european. Grok lived in a tribe with twenty or thirty (it varied with the season and the rain) other Cro-Magnums in what is now Lyons, France. They called themselves the Kapooey, and they mostly ate nuts, mushrooms, berries, antelope, and an occasional mammoth or bear. They considered themselves very advanced since they had evolved along with their tools and now sported the ability to start fires, and were armed with flint spears. The Kapooey had been living for several generations in a nest of caves where bears had been living before them. Most of the stories that the old people told were about the various ways that the bears had been forced out. Bears still were very numerous, very dangerous, and quite often would

spontaneously appear and try to force a Kapooey out his own cave. These stories were taken very literally by everyone.

One day while Grok was out collecting mushrooms and he decided to play with his breath. This was a common children's game among the Kapooey tribesmen, and was often used to break the boredom of picking mushrooms all day long. Grok decided that he would see how long he could hold his breath. Grok would breath in slowly, then force himself to hold his breath for as long as possible. Early in the afternoon when it was warming up a bit, Grok sat down under a tree and took off a few of his fur pieces. Lounging around eating his mushrooms, Grok played holding his breath again. But this time when he breathed out, he did so in such a manner that a great deal of spore was blown off the head of a large mushroom he was about to eat. Now Grok had seen this happen before, but had never seen it so clearly.

Grok picked up another mushroom and tried it again. He breathed in very deep, held his breath for as long as possible, and blew out in exactly the same way. Mushroom spore was blown in the air. Grok was amazed. He hadn't thought of it before, because he had just never really sat down and thought about it, but it seemed to Grok that everytime he breathed out some invisible stuff came out. Grok put his hand up to his nose. He breathed in, and he breathed out. Grok's eyes opened. It had felt to him like some invisible stuff went in when he breathed in, and came out when he breathed out.

Grok stood up and started flailing his arms around him. Grok could feel some thing all around him. Grok flapped his hands wildly about his face and could feel the stuff brushing his cheek. Grok started laughing hysterically, jumping up and down, and flailing his arms about him. Grok thought, "since this stuff is invisible, and it's everywhere, it must have a name." But he had never heard of it, or heard a story about it. So Grok decided to give it two names and put them one after the other and make it twice as long at the regular names that they gave to non-human things. Grok decided to call it Invisible Stuff, which in his language sounded like AE' *HER. Grok stood there with his eyes closed, and his hands up in the air, and he screamed out over and over again: "AE'*HER! AE'*HER! AE'*HER!"

"Grok?"

Grok stopped screaming and opened his eyes. It was Philo his brother's youngest son. Philo had as many suns as Grok had fingers and toes, that is to say, eighteen and a half.

"Philo! I find big Invisible Stuff! I find Ae'*Her!" Philo ran up to Grok and started looking around vigorously.

"Where? Where is big Invisible Stuff?"

Grok laughed and, stepping out, started flailing his arms all around him.

"It is here! It is all around us! I find Ae'*Her!"

Philo's bright smiling face began to fade slowly into a stern confusion. "Big Invisible Stuff is where?"

Grok went up Philo and began to fan his own face. "Do this, Philo, make your hand jump up and down, and you will feel big Invisible Stuff brush your face like a woman's hair. See!" Grok, again, started fanning his own face.

Philo was getting very disturbed. He slowly lifted his hand up in the air near his face, looked at Grok a few moments, and then slowly lowered it down. "I do not feel this big Invisible Stuff. Have you eaten too many mushrooms uncle?"

"No! I only ate two handfuls. But you have to make hand go fast. See!" Again, Grok demonstrated.

Philo became very afraid. Grok was beginning to act like an Owl Hunter and Philo felt that he needed to go back and warn the tribe. So the next time Grok started jumping up and down screaming Ae'*Her, Philo took the opportunity to run away as fast as he could. Looking back over his shoulder he saw that Grok wasn't following him, so Philo relaxed and began to wonder how to warn the tribe.

Philo found an elder named Booord and related the story to him the best he could in broken Kapooy. Booord began to laugh.

"Grok is no Owl Hunter," he said, "Grok eat too many mushrooms. He is Dream Man!"

Philo started smiling too. "Yes! Grok is no Owl Hunter! Grok is Dream Man!" Then Philo started laughing too, and he went away to tell everyone in the tribe how Grok ate too many mushrooms that day and was a Dream Man.

That night, like every night, after nuts and berries and mushrooms, the Kapooy started a big fire. Then they danced naked around the fire and jumped up and down. Then, later, everyone sat down to hear stories. By consensus everyone wanted to hear Grok tell about that day's mushroom hunting trip.

Grok became very serious and began to relate how he discovered Ae'*Her, the big Invisible Stuff. But as he began to expound upon the details of his experience using big hand movements, exaggerated walks, and sequences of "Ohh!" and "Ahh!" his fellow tribesmen became very disturbed. Finally Booord stood up and everyone fell silent. He spoke directly to Grok: "We no like big Invisible Stuff, so we think you must be Dream Man."

Grok felt a great pressure on his chest and stepped back a foot. "I am no Dream Man. I feel big Invisible Stuff. I feel Ae'*Her. See!" And Grok rushed up to him and began fanning his own face.

Booord slowly lifted his hand up in the air near his face, looked at Grok a few moments, and then slowly lowered it down. "I do not feel this big Invisible Stuff. You have eaten too many mushrooms. You are Dream Man. We no like big Invisible Stuff. We no like Ae'*Her." Then Booord turned around and went to his cave. Everyone else followed suit, and Grok was left alone by the dying fire. He had never felt so lonely.

The next day was worse. All the tribe's children threw mud at him, and everytime he tried to have sex with his cave mate she ran away screaming "Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her!" Finally she went to her sister's cave and Grok was left alone. He was a very frustrated young Cro-Magnum. But all this was forgotten by mid-Afternoon when a Kapooey tribeswomen came back crying that she had been attacked in the woods by a monster.

Indeed, about this time, a large Neanderthal tribe had moved into the woods which were adjacent to the Kapooey's cave complex. The Kapooey called the Neanderthals "Monster People", and this name was very descriptive. A few Kapooey elders remembered stories about these Neanderthals, and warned the tribe that they were very very bad. Everyone was worried.

Soon a few Neanderthals came close and looked at the caves. They raped a few Kapooey tribeswomen, stole as many nuts and berries as they could with their bare hands and went back into the woods. That night the Kapooey had an extra large fire and were only able to keep Neanderthal marauders out of their caves by waving fire and throwing spears. Everyone in the Kapooey tribe knew that they were in very grave danger. Their food was low, as always, and they couldn't go out and get more without the Neanderthals attacking them. Booord decided to leave a few men to guard the women and children hidden in the largest cave (Booord's own cave as a matter of fact) and to force a confrontation as soon as the sun jumped out of the ground.

Sprite by Kiri Namtvedt

And, sure enough, as soon as the sun came up Booord led the majority of the men in the tribe to the Neanderthal's spot in the woods, and woke them up by killing off the first half-dozen Neanderthals that they came across, spearing them in their heads as they slept and screaming "Monster People Die! Monster People Die!" This commotion, however, woke the other Neanderthal's up and chaos broke out. The Cro-Magnum were lighter and had many spears, but the Neanderthal were very, very strong and threw large rocks. Since the Neanderthals outnumbered the Kapooey tribesmen by a factor of three to one, the Kapooey were quickly driven back to Booord's cave where they were able to finally stop the Neanderthals. Fortunately, Booord's cave was blessed with a very small entrance tunnel and only one Neanderthal could fit at a time. Nonetheless, the Kapooey had to kill half a dozen Neanderthals before they stopped trying to force their way in.

The Kapooey stayed holed up in Booord's cave for almost twenty-four hours before thirst, hunger, and stench forced a few of them to venture out. Philo, who was small and

fast, volunteered to go and look. He came back quickly.

"The Monster People are living in our caves. Also they are pissing and shitting all over everything so that it smells like them!"

A mumur broke out amongst the tribesmen. Booord was very afraid. He did not know what to do. Maybe they would all die? Suddenly, from the rear, Grok spoke up.

"I have idea. I will use big Invisible Stuff to make the Monster People go away."

All the Kapooey men turned and looked at him with dumb expressions on their faces. Even Booord was stunned.

"We no like big Invisible Stuff," Booord said, "We no use your Ae'*Her to make the Monster People go away. We take spears and kill them in their sleep."

"But Booord," Philo said, "that did not work. When we shout 'Monster People Die' they all wake up and start to kill us! And there are more of them!" Booord scratched his head. What to do? Grok spoke up again.

"If Ae'*Her is good thing, and I not Dream Man, then I confuse Monster People's eyes and Kapooey run out with spears and Monster People die. Then everyone say big Invisible Stuff is good. If Ae'*Her is a bad thing, then Monster People kill Grok with their stones, and everyone say big Invisible Stuff is bad."

Grok's speech was very eloquent and no one could understand it all, but it was clear to everyone that Grok would run out to confuse them and that they would then make Monster People die. Also, it seemed clear to most of them that this would mean that Ae'*Her was good. So all the tribesmen lifted up their spears and started chanting "Go Grok! Go Grok! Go Grok!" Even Booord joined in.

Grok lifted his hands up over his head and started out the cave. As he went out he chanted Ae'*Her over and over again.

The Neanderthals, around this time, were busy pissing and shitting on everything to make it smell more like them. So they were very very surprised when Grok, a skinny little Cro-Magnum, came walking slowly out of his cave with his hands up over his head shouting Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! They were so amazed, in fact, that they just stopped what they were doing and looked at him with dumb expressions on their faces.

Thus, Grok was able to walk unhindered all the way to the fire pit. Since there had been no fire the night before he just stepped over the giant stone rim, and waddled directly into the middle of the cold grey ash. The ash was, in fact, so deep that it came up to Grok's knees. He just stood there with his hands over his head shouting Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her!

Now, even though they had low sloping foreheads, the Neanderthal were very fascinated by this whole thing and so the whole Neanderthal tribe walked over to the fire pit and formed a ring around Grok while he stood there shouting. Also, the Neanderthals looked at each other and scratched their heads. Even the Neanderthal women were there with their Neanderthal children in their arms. This would be a story they would grunt to each other about for hours.

Grok let his shouting fade very slowly until he was whispering so softly that the Neanderthals had to cock their heads to hear him. The Kapooey tribesmen, of course, also didn't know what was going on.

Grok turned and looked at the Monster People. There were as many of them as fingers and toes on two people¹, but there were only as many male Neanderthals as there were fingers and toes on both hands and one foot. Grok knew that the Kapooey had as many male tribesmen with spears as there were fingers on the two hands, so he knew that what he had in mind might actually work.

Grok turned and faced the largest, ugliest, meanest Neanderthal Man. He had a giant bone necklace, so Grok decided to name him "Bone Man." Next to Bone Man was a Neanderthal woman with large hanging breasts and an antelope bone through her nose. Grok decided to name her "Breast Woman." Grok pointed his finger at Breast Woman and motioned for her to come to him and have sex. Without thinking, of course, Breast Woman stepped over the rock rim of the fire pit and started walking towards him. Bone Man became furious, grabbed Breast Woman and pulled her out of the fire pit. Then Bone Man made a loud grunt, the other Neanderthal men grunted too, and all of them stepped into the fire pit to kill Grok.

But they never made it, for ere Bone Man made three steps into the fire pit, Grok picked up two heaping handfuls of ash and started furiously blowing it into his face. Bone Man fell to his knees and started wiping his eyes, but ash was everywhere and this only made it worse. Quickly, and spryly, before the slow moving Neanderthals could react, Grok blew ash into all their eyes. All fifteen Neanderthal men stood frantically grunting and wiping more and more ash into their eyes.

Back at the mouth of Booord's cave the Kapooey were astonished. They saw the Neanderthals surround Grok, and they all became very quiet. When Grok motioned to the Monster People woman and she started walking towards him they all laughed. But when they saw the Monster People men start in towards him they all clutched each other in morbid fear. Grok would not live to see the sun fall back into the earth. And all Grok did was run blowing Ae' *Her in their faces.

"What is he doing with the Ae'*Her?" Booord asked Philo.

"He is using the big Invisible Stuff to blow fire dust in their faces."

"Why is he doing that?" Booord asked.

"I ... I ... I do not know," Philo replied, shaking his head in disbelief that his uncle was about to be killed. But, Grok still wasn't dead.

"Why is Grok not dead?" Booord asked Philo.

"Because the Monster People's men are walking around blind and stumbling into each other." Philo jumped to his feet. "Look!" he said. The Kapooey tribesmen looked very close. "The Monster People's men are walking around blind and stumbling into each other!"

"So?" Booord asked.

"Monster People Die!" Philo cried out, "Monster People Die!"

There was a great hush that fell on the Kapooey tribesmen. They were very confused. They looked very carefully at the Monster People's men who were, by now, all on their knees grunting and rubbing more ash in their eyes. Grok was running towards Booord's cave. He came up to the mouth of the cave, grabbed his spear, and started running back to the fire pit screaming "Monster People Die! Monster People Die! Monster People Die!"

Suddenly the tribesmen understood. The Monster People's men were walking around blind and were stumbling into each other. And the Kapooey had spears! So, all at once, the Kapooey tribesmen rushed down to the fire pit screaming "Monster People Die! Monster People Die! Monster People Die!" And in a few minutes the Kapooey had killed every single Neanderthal man, woman, and child. Grok, and the big Invisible Stuff, had saved the World.

That night, after dancing naked around the fire, Grok went up to every person in his tribe and blew Ae'*Her in their face. "The big Invisible Stuff, Ae'*Her, is good stuff!" he said, and everyone agreed.

1 About thirty-seven.

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About this capture

From the Camel's Back

By Baphemetis Continuity, Lodge Master

Penis, penis, penis, penis, cocksucker. Oops. Even my spellchecker doesn't recognize cocksucker - I guess it's not in Microsoft Word's internal dictionary. It should be in there, because cocksucking is here to stay. It's a whole lot of fun and when done right, gives great pleasure to all parties involved. I love to suck cock. And so do many of the adults I know - and some of the ones who aren't so sure if they want to give mouth massage to another's diamond rod are happy to be on the receiving end. If they're not a cock-sucker, then perhaps they're a yoni nibbler. Or a vulva licker. Or maybe just an expert kisser.

Wait. Come to think of it, I do know an adult who doesn't: my best friend from high school doesn't suck cock. She decided when she was about 15 that there was something very nasty and unsavory about giving oral pleasure. Something about urine and semen coming from the same tube. Something her mother said a nice girl doesn't do. But I know her to be a happy recipient of the previously mentioned yoni nibbling. She likes to cum that way, no doubt. Fear of oral sex isn't unusual among the uninitiated, I suppose, but it always surprises me when I meet an adult who claims not to partake out of principle. Some people don't like oral sex because their clit or their penis is so sensitive that it sets them off in a bad way. Susie Bright once noted in an essay that she prefers a spanking over a licking. For some it is a matter of aesthetics. Madonna is reputed to eschew the blow-job. But they probably found out by experimentation and not through avoidance of the entire subject.

Similarly, it surprises me when I meet (or observe through the media, as is mostly the case) adults who are squeamish about the word penis. In Victorian times, it was considered unseemly to refer to or display a human leg. Piano legs were adorned with special covers so that no one's delicate sensibilities would be outraged. We do not live in Victorian times, but there seems to be a bit of a holdover. Case in point: there's a radio quiz show which originates in Minnesota called "What Do You Know?" Or maybe it's "Whattaya Know?" The last time I tuned in, one of the questions concerned the "animal part most often smuggled out of Canada and used as an aphrodisiac." The possible answers included reindeer horns, seal penises, and something else. The host read the question and the multiple-choice answers with a curious combination of brashness and apology. No one wanted to repeat the p-word. Jokes were made; nervous giggles. The audience howled. The contestant guessed "reindeer horns". The correct answer was "seal penises". There was no way in hell anybody was going to get it right because no one there wanted to say it. Fully grown humans were guffawing and acting like it was a very big, naughty deal to say the word penis on the radio right out in front of God and everybody on a sunny mid-western afternoon. What I suspect is that they say it at home, among themselves, but they think that all the other people believe they aren't supposed to say it or hear it without out-rage/surprise/embarrassment, so they act out, regardless of their true feelings. If they are actually astounded, embarrassed, etc, then they are pathetic humans and less deserving of a body than some souls swimming around out there in the aethyr waiting to get snared. You get one body. It's got a bunch of cool parts. Know them by name!

It cannot have escaped your notice that the US President has been getting a lot of media attention concerning his supposed extracurricular sexual activities in the Oval Office. Now, to begin with, who President Clinton fucks is none of my business, unless I happen to know them and they tell me about it. The fact that he fucks and sucks does not come as a big surprise; in fact, it would be quite disheartening to think that he didn't have sex. Since he is a married President, and much of the American population seems to think (or act like they think, at least if they think anyone's watching) monogamy is laudable, it is equally unsurprising that he would be concerned with discretion.

Were I in his political and personal position, and about to commence an affair with someone, I'm quite sure an important part of the preliminary negotiation would concern the (obvious) need for secrecy. You know: "We can't fall in love. We can't tell anyone. We have to keep this quiet." How about you? Would you want the world to know - given the situation and all the parameters? Okay, I thought not. So, we're going to rake this man over the coals for behaving in a way that is (at least secretly) understandable to most of the population? Why yes! And that's because there is a vast gulf between the template of natural human behavior and the template that some people, by inference, accept as 'socially correct'. This then is coupled with the great fear that if they let go of the template, even for a moment, the fabric of society will crumble and they will be left standing holding the threads.

The backlash concerning the media coverage of this non-event has been an astounding side note. When Terry Gross was interviewing journalists on her syndicated NPR show, Fresh Air, topic A was how they, the journalists, were handling "the difficulties and embarrassments of having to discuss oral sex in the media." It was the damndest thing I've ever heard. It was a visit to the Twilight Zone, both for me, and I think, for the journalists interviewed. Once Terry asked, they seemed to feel the need to play along; "Oh yes, harrumph, it seems so formal." Ah, at last, a breath of real fresh air.

The front page of the Austin American Statesman featured an article about the anger and frustration parents were feeling now that they could "no longer allow their children to read the paper or hear the news." While some parents claimed this was because the President was being shown to be a liar and this was deeply upsetting to the kiddies, most came clean and said it was because they had no clue about how to explain "oral sex" to their children.

And what I want to know is: why is this a mystery? What is the problem with saying, "it's a way adults give each other pleasure" and moving along?

I don't think we should be admitting to oral sex; I think we should be proclaiming it. And until we do, we are implicitly allowing this madness to go on. If you don't live your values, then you have to stand by and watch while that which you truly love gets trashed. And you can do nothing, without standing up for what you believe in.

Accordingly, I hereby proclaim July 1, 1998, as Oral Pleasure Day! It is, not

coincidentally, my birthday. Come on out and celebrate Oral Pleasure Day with me; and remember, we don't call it oral sex around here either.

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[The Science & Spirit of Astrology](#)

[by Soror Nephthys](#)

The global dichotomy of science and spirit has long interested me. All the wars waged across the Earth, large and small, cold and hot, can be broken down to a fundamental division between what recent times have revealed to be Humankind's two faces. I also believe that these wars, whether they occur on battlefields or in political halls, will never stop until Humankind as a whole recognizes that science and spirit must and do coexist: it is ignorance of this Universal Law that generates upheaval. Through my own personal experiences and through the use of Astrology, as well as other systems, I have gained what I believe to be unique insight into this gap between science and spirit. I now truly believe it to be one of the most useful tools at the present for merging Humanity's concrete scientific side with its abstract spiritual side.

Not being a person to take any sort of complex system lightly, I have delved deeply into Astrology. Most of my background henceforth has been in the hard sciences, largely biology and chemistry, thusly generating a hardened skeptic: if I couldn't sense it and test it, it wasn't worthy of my attention. As I studied these disciplines, I began to notice that they blended together in places. Biology became chemistry at the microscopic level, and vice versa. Chemistry became physics at the atomic level. So on and so forth. I also noticed that despite this blending, there was always a hole in the explanation of various things once a certain level of detail was reached. Scientists put on their serious faces and term those things that have yet to be solved "conundrums" and pursue answers with the relentless fervor of religious fanatics. Their revelations have brought monumental change to the way we live our lives, yet there remain unanswered questions.

We answer these questions by practicing whatever religion or spiritual path we happen to feel comfortable with and tapping into the current of energy that connects all living things in the Universe. Christians call it God. Muslims call it Allah. Thelemites call it Will. It cannot be measured by instruments. It can only be sensed by a living thing. While science is required to explain the things we cannot physically sense, spirituality is required to explain the things we can only feel inside. Astrology is both scientific and spiritual in its principal, which makes it fairly unique amongst most disciplines.

Several centuries ago, astronomy and Astrology were one and the same, and were respected and used by royalty and peon alike. Briefly, science and spirit were one in the Renaissance Age. Science as we know it was born out of spirit, out of things now deemed superstitious, or even Satanic. A great deal of our basic chemical knowledge comes from ancient alchemists who depended upon their fellow astrologers and studied it themselves. Almost as quickly as it was born, science severed its ties with its spiritual parents. Astrology retains its scientific elements, though. Proper calculation of charts requires knowledge of higher math functions as well as an understanding of astrophysical motion. Astrology still relies on the base measurements of astronomy to create ephemeris. Yet all the science aside, Astrology still requires basic human intuition and insight, the same kind of insight the psychologist uses to help patients overcome difficulties. There are places in Astrology where measurement stops and intuition begins. Used properly and in depth, Astrology can be a tool to show us how we interact with ourselves, as well as with other people and other situations. It is a tool for understanding strengths and weaknesses, and a map by which we can navigate our lives to our best advantage and happiness. It is one of the greatest keys to finding one's True Will. It shows us where we need to work to better ourselves, and more importantly, Astrology shows us how to fix those problems which keep us from our Will. More often than not, misunderstanding one's self leads to neglect of one or many parts of the life which may need attention, but are neglected because of the general set of 'should-do' rules most of us have. Confusion occurs when life does not yield happiness when lived out according to 'plan'. This confusion can be abated by using Astrology to show where neglect and imbalance is occurring, and how to rework one's life so that equilibrium is achieved. Through equilibrium comes happiness and fulfillment of the Great Work.

Astrology gives us our own personal user's guide, custom written for the individual person by time, planets, and the stars. We really do come with instructions! This guide contains much, much more than the Sun. While it represents our most expressive self, it is only one of many bodies that interact in the dance that makes each of us our personal selves. Focusing on the Sun cannot do what a complete birth chart can do: create a psychological map of a human being that shows how each part of a person interacts with all the others. Recognizing the sources of separate life identities and needs gives one the power to integrate them into a working whole. However, without the birth chart or many years of psychoanalysis, it is virtually impossible to do this easily. It's like trying to put a puzzle together in the dark when you don't know what it's supposed to look like. Astrology shows someone not only the nature of these different parts of the self, but how they interact with one another in positive and negative ways. It shows you what the puzzle is supposed to look like so you can begin constructing it in the light.

Why Astrology works may be something that always baffles us. It is not my belief that we are somehow 'influenced' directly by the stars or planets, either by gravity, light, or otherwise. My own personal philosophy is that the Universe moves in cycles moving at different rates, thusly changing their relationships with each other. Yet each cycle is born out of the previous: as above, so below. Macrocosm, microcosm. The signs represent the older, most solid and slow cycles that govern the Universe on a fundamental level: it takes over 25,000 years for our entire Solar System to pass through the signs. The planets represent the newer, faster cycles that are more relative to our own immediate environment's evolution, immediate being that of the Solar System. The houses represent the quick cycles of daily life ('quick' relative to the slowest ones), the parts of one's life that can be readily defined relative to other's lives as well. The aspects represent our inner psychological cycles, the behaviors that make us who we are. The patterns in each set of cycles set the guide rules for that cycle, or the best way that cycle can be manifested. Placing all these different cycles together in one place lets one understand how there is so much variance amongst Humankind, and also how there is similarity. It links us by acknowledging that we are all part of one great scheme, and it separates us by telling us the intricacies of that scheme. Together, they represent the best way for each of us to manifest ourselves in our Universe, to manifest our Wills. Breaching the gap between science and spirit through the use of Astrology and other tools is necessary not just for the individual, but for all Humanity.

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About this capture
Rose Cross
Manifestation Template
By Frater Xephyr
Rose Cross

There are many methods by which anyone can get anything they want. Thelemites are, of course, familiar with Crowley's definition of magick as the method by which reality is changed in accord with one's will. The art and practice of magick frequently involves a long-term process of self-development and understanding and can be seen as a primary tool of personal growth. The methods and philosophies of magick are well documented these days, and there really is no substitute for a wide base of occult understanding.

Those with little or no personal experience with magick frequently suffer from the is perception that white magick is stuff that relates only to the Great Work™ and black magick is stuff that relates to getting what you really want. Consequently, the idea of using magick for personal gain has received a lot of bad press. The following activity will not be called "magick" for this reason. Any resemblance of the following to an act of magick is hereby deemed "coincidental".

This is the simple four-step process to get anything desired:

Decide what you want
Define what your goal is and what it is not
Plan to get what you want
Do your plan

Before it is experienced, the following method may seem too simple. Obviously, a full description of the process is slightly more complicated, or this article would be over. As a framework upon which to weave one's own dreams, this method is simple enough to cover most needs, yet complete enough to be fully self-contained. Here follows a full description of the process.

Decide what you want

This may seem like an obvious step, but so often, it is forgotten. Without a firm idea of what is truly wanted - without a goal - no amount of trying will get one any closer to get anything or anywhere. It is important at this stage to recognize that the desire for change is ultimately rooted in some personal behavior or necessity. One may want to change others, but only the self can be changed. This desire should thus be expressed in terms of a personal change or experience.

Should you find that a sentence or two has been written about your object of desire, another, brief, description should be written. The shortest description of the desired goal is called the "target phrase".

Define what you goal is and what it is not

It's all good and well to decide to want something, but without a firm idea about what that thing is and what it isn't, there is little chance that what you get will be anything like what you imagined. This is a good opportunity to practice constructive list-building. Take two sheets of paper and write the target phrase at the top of both pages. On the first page, end the target phrase with "IS", on the other, end the phrase with "IS NOT".

Begin by writing a simple sentences describing the object of desire. If a description uses negation, put that sentence on the "IS NOT" page, otherwise, put it on the "IS" page. Brainstorm for more sentences, even if they seem obvious. Make sure what you write is true, not only for the object desired, but also for yourself. Anything that prevents you from getting what you want should also be put on the "IS NOT" page.

After the desire has been fully described, examine your two lists. For each item on the "IS NOT" page, there should be a corresponding item on the "IS" page which can replace it. Create such sentences as necessary. Once all of your "IS NOT"s have been negated by corresponding "IS"s, throw the "IS NOT" page away. Burn it, if you think doing so might make you feel better.

Plan to get what you want

Go down the "IS" list, called the "description list," and look for anything you already have and mark it with a dash. Anything that seems like it would be easy to get right now, mark with a star. Things which appear to require some effort, but which are not impossible, mark with a cross. Remaining items should be marked with a bang (exclamation point), and represent things which seem very difficult, if not impossible, to get.

The plan is created from the marked description list. Start with a fresh sheet of paper and write "PLAN" on the top. Write the word "GIVEN" on the next line, followed by all of the items marked with a dash on the description list. Skip a line and write "To Do". For each item in your description list marked with a star, write that item in your PLAN, followed by a few sentences describing how that particular point can be had. Continue the process with the items marked with a cross, but expect to write a paragraph or two about each one. If, during the process of writing out this part of the plan, an item appears to be far more difficult than expected, change its star or cross to a bang on the description list and cross it out of the plan for now.

At this point, you should have a description list describing the object of desire, and a plan which describes most, if not all, of the things you need to do to get what you want. Anything in your description list marked impossible (with a bang) should become the object of serious meditation. Ask yourself if this item is really part of what you want. Ask yourself why it is impossible and try to find a way for it to become possible. Ultimately, each such item can be broken down like your main object of your desire as a separate

process.

Do your plan

Up until now, this method has required little or no effort from the participant other than a good amount of thinking and writing. Unless this last step is taken, all the above preparation will be for naught. This is where you go down your PLAN and do those things that you know will bring you closer to where you want to be. You do not need to wait until your plan is complete to begin doing it. It's easier to do the simple things first, anyway, and that rapid reinforcement of simple goals met gives one motivation to complete the full task, making even the more difficult tasks seem easier as one goes along. Actually working on the plan is incentive to finish writing it, as well.

Once you've begun writing your plan, try to read it out loud each morning. As you accomplish each item on the list, cross it out on the plan. Try to keep a record of what you do to accomplish each task, how it went, and what its results were. Periodically review your progress and decide if you need to change some aspect of your approach.

As time wears on, the action items in your plan may change. Desired items can fall away and be replaced by other items, so if the description list changes, it should follow that the PLAN would change appropriately. Should your plan take a long time to complete, you can expect it to change frequently. Like life.

If you find yourself midway through your plan without any motivation to complete it, go through the whole process again from where you are. Sometimes it helps to take stock of your current position, to reaffirm that this is what you want or to give yourself the chance to decide that it's not really what you want. It's okay to do this. It is better to quit when you realize you should than to spend time and energy proceeding towards something you don't really want.

Proof

There's no final exam on this method, no place to go prove that you have made it all the way through. Its only proof is in its implementation. When you get to the end of your plan, you either have what you wanted or you have decided that it wasn't something you wanted. Either way, the desire for something will be satiated. Any energy spent this way will be used constructively, encouraging self-understanding. And the more you understand about yourself now, the easier it will be to make yourself happy later.

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About this capture
Rose Cross
Manifestation Template
By Frater Xephyr
Rose Cross

There are many methods by which anyone can get anything they want. Thelemites are, of course, familiar with Crowley's definition of magick as the method by which reality is changed in accord with one's will. The art and practice of magick frequently involves a long-term process of self-development and understanding and can be seen as a primary tool of personal growth. The methods and philosophies of magick are well documented these days, and there really is no substitute for a wide base of occult understanding.

Those with little or no personal experience with magick frequently suffer from the is perception that white magick is stuff that relates only to the Great Work™ and black magick is stuff that relates to getting what you really want. Consequently, the idea of using magick for personal gain has received a lot of bad press. The following activity will not be called "magick" for this reason. Any resemblance of the following to an act of magick is hereby deemed "coincidental".

This is the simple four-step process to get anything desired:

Decide what you want
Define what your goal is and what it is not
Plan to get what you want
Do your plan

Before it is experienced, the following method may seem too simple. Obviously, a full description of the process is slightly more complicated, or this article would be over. As a framework upon which to weave one's own dreams, this method is simple enough to cover most needs, yet complete enough to be fully self-contained. Here follows a full description of the process.

Decide what you want

This may seem like an obvious step, but so often, it is forgotten. Without a firm idea of what is truly wanted - without a goal - no amount of trying will get one any closer to get anything or anywhere. It is important at this stage to recognize that the desire for change is ultimately rooted in some personal behavior or necessity. One may want to change others, but only the self can be changed. This desire should thus be expressed in terms of a personal change or experience.

Should you find that a sentence or two has been written about your object of desire, another, brief, description should be written. The shortest description of the desired goal is called the "target phrase".

Define what your goal is and what it is not

It's all good and well to decide to want something, but without a firm idea about what that thing is and what it isn't, there is little chance that what you get will be anything like what you imagined. This is a good opportunity to practice constructive list-building. Take two sheets of paper and write the target phrase at the top of both pages. On the first page, end the target phrase with "IS", on the other, end the phrase with "IS NOT".

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About this capture
The Natural Dreamer
by Soror Oalimn
Artwork by Martijn Benders

I would like to take the time to thank those of you who have sent in your letters. This will be the last installment of The Natural Dreamer for now. I may continue it some time in the future...

Letters to The Natural Dreamer
Dear Natural Dreamer,

I have been working on my dream techniques for some time now. I find that I have learned some new things but I am very frustrated when it comes to being disciplined about writing everything down. I have three kids and a full-time job so there never seems to be enough time. Can you make any suggestions for a quick method of learning lucid dreaming?

Time seems to always be an issue when you're working on a special project for yourself. I can suggest a couple of techniques for you to practice; perhaps they will work for you. Try these exercises when you are eating lunch by yourself, sitting on the toilet, taking a shower or while engaged in any activity that does not require a lot of your attention.

Start by getting focused. Relax your body, slow your breathing and concentrate on a daydream. You can daydream about anything! Sex, vacation, food, romance; find a subject that is good for you. Start by visualizing yourself as playing a role in the daydream. It is no good if you are an observer looking in. You need to be involved in the action. Start to control your actions; do what you want to do and make the daydream go your way. One might think of this as fantasizing as well. Practice this technique whenever you can and build your dream skills. Practice flying, breathing under water, self-defense techniques, or whatever supernatural power you want to achieve by working at them in your day dreams.

If you build your skills, this newly acquired ability may transfer to when you are dreaming while sleeping. The most important matter is realizing that you are dreaming. You can mentally get ready by telling yourself out loud that you will have lucid dreams. If that does not work, write it down on a piece of paper a few times and put the paper in a special place. Ask your Angels or Gods to help you, or maybe a deceased ancestor could lend a hand....

Sit down and think about how you will reach your mental being, then: give it a try. I know many people who have used these techniques with success. Remember: it takes 21 days to start a new habit.

Dear Natural Dreamer,

I am quite a natural dreamer like yourself. I have been working on my pre-cognitive dreams for some time now. I have to admit that these types of dreams are not transmitted clearly and tend to make little if any sense. Do you have any suggestions that I might try to better these dream skills?

I have been working on my own pre-cognitive dreams for years. It can be frustrating but hang in there and you will start to see results. One technique that I use is lucid dreaming.

I now have a good strong hold on lucid dreaming and this helps me with my pre-cognitive dreaming. Most of my precognitive dreaming is in a form of a natural disaster.

For example, I have dreamt about a tornado. (I am not usually in these dreams, but am observing from above or wherever.) In my dream, I can remember screaming at people to find out where we were. In the past, the only information I could get out of the people was garbled and was not spoken in English. So I thought, 'maybe they are speaking to me in Enochian.' But I finally beat the language barrier by using my lucid dreaming technique. Once I know I am dreaming, then I can ask a direct question and get an answer. It was a little scary at first because I didn't expect them to talk back to me. So I am still learning to deal with it. But now, if I have a dream about a tornado I ask the people 'what city are we in?' Then, I can check out weather conditions in other cities to see if they had a tornado, or keep a record to see if the dream comes true in the future.

Unfortunately I don't have this mastered yet, but I can tell you from my own experience that the time frame between dream and incident has shortened itself as I continue this experiment. Sometimes a natural disaster would hit six months to a year down the road from the dream, so my timing was way off. In my dreams, I am now asking for more information besides the place, and I am now in the three to six month range. So hopefully as I continue these exercises I will be get better and better at pre-cognitive dreaming. It is a skill that must be developed over time.

I am sharing real experiences with you in the hopes that it will help you figure out your next step into the wonderful world of dreams. Any great mystery is worth solving if you have the patience and endurance to do it. What may seem weird to others may be quite natural for you. I never let that get in my way. Keeping an open mind is important when it comes to different techniques with dreaming. If I had to stand on my head for two minutes every night just so that I could have a lucid dream you bet I would be doing it!

Sweet Dreams for now,

Soror Oalimn

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About this capture

When is a Pagan Not a Pagan?

by Dionysos Thriambos

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Religious Thelema, or New Aeon Gnosticism, is a radically individualistic system of observance. Thus it enjoys nearly as many characterizations as it does adherents. Even the institution of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, a subset of that system, embraces vast divergences. While I don't identify with the label "pagan," I know that many of my brothers and sisters in the Church do. This fact testifies to both the rich variety of perspective in the Church, and the complexity and multivalency of the word "pagan." This essay, occasioned by the imminence of the Council of Magickal Arts Beltane Festival, is a brief meditation on the varied denotations and connotations of "pagan," and how they apply to my personal observance of Thelema, and to that of OTO-EGC.

Pagan: "especially : a follower of a polytheistic religion (as in ancient Rome)"

(a Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition)

Thelema might be considered polytheistic. But it might also be considered a relativized form of monotheism, through the doctrine of the Holy Guardian Angel. It can also be considered atheistic, based on certain fairly direct readings of The Book of the Law. The jury is out-and I, for one, hope it stays there.

Pagan: "an adherent of a non-Christian religion"

Here's the one definition of pagan with which I can comfortably identify; i.e. any definition that would include not only Thelema, but also Islam. There are various other shades of "non-Christian" which don't necessarily accommodate Thelema. For example, Buddhism is more thoroughly non-Christian, because Thelema actively makes use of the symbolic detritus of Christianity, and thus enters into the "Judeo-Christian" continuum of religious conception.

Pagan: "an adherent of a pre-Christian religion"

This definition largely overlaps the first, and for our purposes we can extend it to cover "neo-paganism," where an attempt is made to recreate such religions without the advantage of a surviving tradition of practice. Thelema doesn't fit here because it is actually post-Christian, as just noted. The highly syncretic nature of Thelema enables it to "reactivate" pre-Christian materials that have been assimilated by Christianity, as well as to mesh with entirely non-Christian concepts and practices.

Pagan: "a follower of a rustic or provincial religion"

This definition starts to delve into the etymology of the term, from Late Latin *paganus*,

from Latin, country dweller, from pagus country district. During the spread of Christianity, "pagan" became a term of derision for the indigenous religions, as opposed to the metropolitan sophistication of Christianity. In a more modern (or po-mo) context, Christianity itself fits this sense of "pagan" far better than Thelema or most neo-paganisms do.

Pagan: "one whose worship is performed in the wilderness"

This definition is related to the previous one, as well as to the kindred term "heathen." It is particularly apt of certain neo-Pagan systems where this feature is emphasized.

There are certainly grounds for Thelemic Paganism of this type, e.g. Liber Legis I:61.

We also have evidence of the exercise of such Thelemic Paganism in various camping festivals. But OTO-EGC, along with the bulk of Hermetic/Rosicrucian-style Thelema, is oriented around a distinctly temple-based ritual technology.

Pagan: "a follower of deistic or 'natural' religion, as opposed to 'revealed religion'"

This idea of paganism holds that pagans rely on the Book of Nature for their religious conceptions, rather than the Bible, Koran, Stanzas of Dzyan, or some other "revealed" text transmitted through human authorship. Thelema obviously fails this test, though not so thoroughly as might at first be thought. Thelema makes of itself a sounder revealed religion than most, because of the documentation of the reception of the Law and the existence of the original manuscript. But it is also close to natural religion in its social and moral application, owing both to its central philosophies, and to the practical consequences of the Class A Short Comment to Liber Legis.

My final observation concerns the social origins of contemporary neo-paganism. These can be traced to

Wicca, of which Gerald Gardner established the germinal form, clearly informed by his initiation in the Thelemic OTO. (For an entertaining summary, see T Allen Greenfield's paper "The Secret History of Modern Witchcraft"-currently on the World Wide Web. Various spiritual elements of the late 20th Century counterculture of "sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll," as mapped out in Crowley's paper "Energized Enthusiasm." (Equinox I:9, p. 17 ff.)

Religious consequences of American feminism in the countercultural context.

Religious consequences of the environmental movement in the countercultural context.

From the perspective of a natural history of religions, Thelema is thus prior to neo-paganism, and the latter should be considered a development of the former, rather than the other way around, as many contemporary students of "alternative religions" presume.

Love is the law, love under will.

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About this capture
The Included Middle

by Tim Maroney

In this column I will be looking at magical and mystical issues from a skeptical perspective.

On a recent web-surfing expedition I discovered a web site dedicated to "progressive Thelema", and its introduction praised the virtue of skepticism. This interested me because doubt is one of my paradigmatic emotions -- a restless inquisitiveness that upon hearing a comforting explanation, immediately asks "what if just the opposite were true?" Reading on, I was disappointed to find that the first essay on the page took astrology for its starting point. It spun out corollary upon corollary from this unquestioned assumption, as if the influence of planetary positions on earthly life were an established fact.

What does it mean to be a skeptic? Classical skeptics such as Pyrrho, Timon and Sextus Empiricus were no kin to the current crop of debunkers. In the pages of the magazine "Skeptical Inquirer" one finds a philosophy of naive materialism and literal truth, but classical skepticism doubted even the existence of matter, and more, doubted that there was any reliable way to draw a distinction between truth and falsehood. A skeptic is one who doubts. The self-described "skeptic" of today is an ideological soldier for scientism, focusing doubt only against rival systems of thought and treating the preferred ideology with deference. A closer modern analogy to the skeptics of old can be found in the philosophies of existentialism and postmodernism, which recognize the individual's role in creating meaning, and treat value judgments as psychological processes.

Doubt is an emotion which all of us possess in greater or lesser degree, and which we apply to various subjects at various times. It is not necessary that everyone be a skeptic, only that people who describe themselves as skeptics earn the title. But to claim one is a skeptic while persistently turning a blind eye to the problems in one's pet theories is to fall short of the mark. This is just as true of those who propound specious refutations of astrology as it is of those who take the horoscope theory as a given.

The transformative power of doubt is such that even when turned to merely ideological ends it may lead to breakthroughs. One-sided debunkers

such as Randi have done us a service when they have exposed real charlatans, and they deserve to be proud of that. Of all the strange theories in magic, one might doubt

only the Renaissance metaphysical idea that the basis of reality can be found in Hebrew letters; perhaps like Guido von List one might be motivated by an anti-Semitic ideology in this doubt. Even so, such a great wealth of excellent thoughts might arise from this ideologically-motivated re-examination of the foundations of metaphysics that the honorific "skeptical" would seem richly deserved. Even partial skepticism is compelling and useful.

Neo-materialists are more likely than mystics to call themselves skeptics. In the popular mind skepticism is associated with rationality and science, and opposed to visions, dreams, fancies, and the imagination. Classical skeptics were anti-rationalists, though -- they doubted the accuracy of intellectual methods and turned reason to an exploration of its own limits, much as Godel's Theorem in the 20th century has shown through the most stringent argument that the most stringent argument always leaves something out. The modern skeptical movement has failed to come to terms with the fact that mathematics, the basis of science, has deconstructed itself, that "reason is a lie; for there is a factor infinite & unknown; & all their words are skew-wise."

It is a mistake to think that skeptics must be opposed to the non-rational psychological phenomena of mysticism. What does it mean to be this peculiar thing, the skeptical mystic -- that is, a true skeptic who is also very concerned with experiencing and understanding what we are accustomed to calling the "spiritual"? For me the answer lies in a psychological paradigm called phenomenology. It is a subtle thing, and for years I could not grasp the notion, but now it has become fundamental in my approach. It revolves around acceptance of psychological reality as true on its own plane, without concern for its external truth. Rather than looking at materials of myth and trance from the judgmental perspective that classes them into truths and delusions, one simply observes them and tries to describe them. This is a basic principle guiding the ethnographic field observation methodology of anthropologists, a perspective that is both detached and engaged -- the self-referentially aware perspective of the participant-observer.

So for instance let us say one has a vision. I find modern science produces many remarkable visions for me, whether I am soaring above the galaxies or delving beneath the nuclei of atoms. One of these visions has been that all reality lies on a self-similar fractal substrate of Planck-scale quantum foam, in which the progression of time occurs by the replication of intervals through an inductive process that is parallel to the division of living cells. I do not know whether this strange idea born during a psychedelic meditation is true as a physical theory, any more than I know whether the Scorpionic elements of my character are due to the sign the Sun occupied when I was born (or would have occupied on the same date a few thousand years ago). Personally I would like the space-time theory to be true, and I would like the horoscopic theory to be false, but in some ways these judgmental desires are irrelevant. The ideas exist as ideas; they influence me; they often move me deeply. Although they are fiction they are no less important to me.

The conception of space-time as a biological process has provided a poetic framework

that often emerges into my perceptions at unexpected moments and helps me to contextualize such phenomena as the apparent transformations of space and time that happen in ritual and meditation. If my skepticism were overdeveloped and lacked phenomenological detachment I would probably never have allowed this unproven and presumably false idea to form fully in my mind. Similarly I find that contemplation of the Scorpionic alchemical formula of redemption through putrefaction leads to what feels like a deep engagement of the work of the decadent poets and the reclamation of Satanic and other demonized symbols. I feel I have a special connection to this formula through my Sun sign. As a student of psychology I realize that the horoscopic theory is almost certainly false, but that is an intellectual knowledge rather than a feeling. My feeling is irrational but I have it.

I do study the science of psychology and in the course of this I come to some more or less definite ideas about what is true or false. Although I recognize that scientific truth exists only within a framework of assumptions which itself is unreliable, I often find it useful to think

as if scientific methods were valid. I do not believe, for instance, that phrenology, palmistry or astrology deal with actual determinants of personality. However, I accept that people can come to self-knowledge through these methods, that experiences of insight are real on the level of psychological processes. While from my perspective this is meant as a compliment, mystics that I talk to sometimes misunderstand it as an insult. They think I am saying "it's all in your mind." Society insults the imagination -- if it's in your mind, there must be something wrong with it. My perspective is just the opposite. Since I believe that nothing external is sacred in itself but that a thing only acquires sacredness through the human attachment of sacral attributes to perceptions, then it is a small step to a view of the mind-stuff as the seat of sacredness, and so as sacred in itself. As a phenomenologist I do not require external validation, such as proof that flowers really are beautiful or that sex really does reflect the cosmic process. I simply note the reality of the psychological process by which things seem to be so.

In future columns I hope to discuss such issues as directing skepticism at materialism, at metaphysics, and even back at skepticism; scientific arguments about astrology; the irrational bases of rationality; the origins of the modern "skeptical" movement; the use of science as a modern mythology; theories of the nature of the mind; belief requirements in movements that claim to have no dogmas; and how and why to remain skeptical in the face of overwhelming personal evidence of the paranormal. I hope to see you there -- even if perhaps you are only a figment of my imagination!

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Cosmic Egg
COVER ARTIST: Criss Piss

In this issue we continue our special feature of the artwork of Criss Piss.

For the article introducing his art, click [here](#).

Art and Artists in This Issue

Cosmic Egg - Criss Piss
Nuit and Hadit - Criss Piss
Septagram - Soror Conscientia Clara
Untitled - Martijn Benders
Chakra - Frater Parser Coaccidence
Pentagram - Soror Conscientia Clara
Sprite - Kiri Namtvedt
Consume It - Qadisha
Science - Qadisha
Detail - Gustav Dore
The Scarlet Letter is always looking for talented Thelemic artists.
If you are interested in submitting, please e-mail Soror Qadisha.

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Ovid Incunabulus by Criss Piss

Ovid Incunabulus by Criss Piss

Scarlet Woman Lodge has just finished another successful year of performances of the Rites of Eleusis. The Rites are always a very magical experience for those who participate in them. Just a few of some of the strangely magical synchronicities that have occurred during the Rites follow: the temple carpet was burned by a kamikazi charcoal briquet during a Mars rehearsal, an unhinged door fell over and knocked a plaque of the sun off of a wall during Sol, women have become pregnant right after Jupiter, members have had encounters with the law right after Mars, the temple owners secured a contract to host a lucrative S&M party at the temple during Saturn. (n.b. restriction and bondage are very Saturnian), and just this year a lunatic from another Thelemic organization started harassing me over the internet right after Luna. Everyone has their own strange tales to tell, but certainly the most momentous of these synchronicities was felt by the entire community a year ago on the Rite of Saturn. It was on this evening that an esteemed member of the community celebrated his Greater Feast. This was Brother Chris Piss.

Just before the Rites began this year, Soror Ariadne, Chris' widow, came upon a last will and testament among Chris' belongings. It was Chris' will that his vast library be donated to the Scarlet Woman Lodge. So on the anniversary of Chris' Greater Feast the Scarlet Woman Lodge became the proud owner of a wonderful library of many occult and rare books. The library is housed in Soror Ariadne's home and she has spent many long hours indexing all of the books and creating a check out system. The library is

open to members twice per month. People from all over have started donating books so the library is growing!

Chris Piss embraced death as an integral part of life. It was appropriate then that he should die on the evening of the Rite of Saturn since Saturn is the planet of Binah, karma and reincarnation and other salient associations. Chris' exploration of death while he was alive took many forms, one of which was a stunning art series depicting skulls, titled "Ego Death #1", "Ego Death #2," etc. In memory of Chris' Greater Feast and in celebration of the opening of the library, The Scarlet Letter will begin featuring some of Chris' fine art beginning with this issue. If you have internet access, please look at the art in full color (<http://www.scarletwoman.org/scarlett/tslhome.htm>).

Click for full size

Thanks is due to Soror Ariadne, both for her time and dedication in administering the new library and for her permission to print this artwork.

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HERMETIC BROTHERHOOD REVISITED

Thoughts on the Antiquity and Continuity of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light

by T Allen Greenfield

"If it be necessary that real members should meet together, they find and recognize each other with perfect certainty." —Karl von Eckartshausen

The extremely important history of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light, or Luxor¹, also known simply as the "H.B. of L." had been nearly forgotten by modern occultists after the turn of the twentieth century, but more especially in the wake of the "second occult revival" in the 1960s and '70s. Then Joscelyn Godwin et al began research for their work on the subject, The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor (Weiser, 1995). At about the same period, I also embarked upon investigations for a book on the same theme, published as The Story of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light (Looking Glass Press, 1996). In some of its earliest literature, the then Grand Master of OTO, Dr. Reuss, had identified the OTO with this Hermetic Brotherhood. Aleister Crowley extolled that venerable repository of insight as one of the bodies from which the OTO claimed to derive its "knowledge and wisdom." There seemed to be an obvious correlative connection to Dr. P.B. Randolph's Brotherhood of Eulis, but the nature of that connection was tenuous as recently as the 1980s.

As I began my research work, I concentrated on the immediate achievements and activities of this lineage in the nineteenth century. It gradually became apparent that a strong case could be made for much earlier origins. It became obvious that there was a remarkable chain of evidence here, rooted in a stream of unusual and striking ideas and practices extraordinary in the Western Occult Tradition (though better known in the

Eastern Tradition as Tantric Yoga and related schools). That firmly suggested that the OTO's most profound ideas had come, in large measure, directly from Randolph's Brotherhood of Eulis, the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light of Max Theon and Dr. Peter Davidson, and, perhaps, also earlier manifestations of the same current. Some of these currents go back, at least, to the Rosicrucian-Freemasonic ferment that so caught the European imagination in the eighteenth century.

Seal of H.B. of L. There was, undeniably, some difficulty with all this. No single clear name was universal to this current of manifestation. We do find such related but differing terms as "Brotherhood of Light," "Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor," "Hermetic Brotherhood of Light," "Fratres Lucis," and other variations. All espoused the same progression of thinking, and there were cases of overlapping individuals involved. Even structural and liturgical similarities were found, but enough diversity and sufficient gaps remained that there was room to challenge that these bodies were even linked, much less the same body of manifestation. Indeed, critics were to arise who professed to see no continuity whatsoever².

I would not presume to speak for others, but by the time the research work on my own book was completed, I was utterly convinced that these "groups" were indeed the same essential body of manifestation. They were, in fact, the source of the core ideas (and some of the configuration) incorporated by Kellner and Reuss into the OTO at the turn of the twentieth century, just as the Oriental Rites of Memphis & Mizraim of John Yarker were, to a large extent, the source of the OTO's structural formation and fraternal outlook. I was a bit baffled when several articulate critics challenged what seemed an obvious continuity and connectedness. It all seemed to boil down to several key points.

(1) It was remarkable for me to learn that the eighteenth century Brothers of Light, and for that matter the Initiated Brothers of Asia, are direct antecedents of OTO. I have at hand some of their rituals. It is almost certainly correct that there are enough similarities in publicly available literature to link these bodies, both directly and through intervening manifestations such as the Theon-Davidson H. B. of L. of the nineteenth century. For example, induction into the eighteenth century Fratres Lucis includes this from the Chief Priest to the acolyte as he anoints him with the Sacred Chrism: "Let him that hath an ear, let him hear with what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving that he receiveth it." A hundred years later, in his monograph *Vital Christianity*, Peter Davidson made these remarks:

"The inward and true Self, the Dual-Soul-Germ, the 'I am,' is identical with the Christ, and the nature of such is the great Mystery and final secret which God holds in reserve for those who seek and love Him. 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving that he receiveth it,'" ³

One is, of course, quite free to interpret "white stone" and "hidden manna" as one chooses⁴; but the coincident citations are nonetheless remarkable. They both derive,

of course, from the book of Revelations, Chapter 2, verse 17: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”

(2) Dr. Reuss does indeed say, in 1920 e.v., “The Gnostics of the Neo-Christian Church, also called the Brothers of Light of the Seven Congregations in Asia or the Order of the Templars of the Orient, proclaim to the misguided suffering humanity the message of salvation of Liberty, Justice, Love.” While, for example, in the “Knight Novice of the Third Year” (1st Degree) in the Fraters Lucis, the reading of the articles of obligation are prefaced as “The general articles on the duties of the Very Reverend and Most Worshipful Seven Fathers, the Heads of the Seven Churches of Asia...”

I don't see any reason why this earlier association in any way precludes links between OTO and later (nineteenth century) organizations with similar names; it simply pushes the time-line further back. Here again, we find the origin of the turn of phrase in the book of Revelations. Parenthetically, the “Seven Churches of Asia” references date from antiquity and show up in all sorts of places, beginning with Rev. 1:11:

“Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.”

It is a venerable formula, perhaps with reference to the medieval mythos of Prester John⁵, and incorporated into the Fraters Lucis or Brothers of Light, and then to the OTO, the initials of which do, after all, stand for “Order of Oriental Templars.”

The point I make in *The Story of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light* is that the continuity of ideas and similarity of names among a variety of groups — particularly when those ideas and names are unique in the Western World — suggest continuity of organization. A “paper trail” may be lacking, or overlaps of membership are not always noted — though both of these factors are also present much of the time — but the continuity is glaringly obvious nonetheless.

(3) The thing that makes the OTO unique is that it teaches a form of sexual magick which seems to arise semi-independently of Eastern (“Tantric”) Schools of a somewhat similar nature. Of the eighteenth century Frater Lucis, even A.E. Waite — no friend of sexual magick — notes of membership qualification, referring to the rituals of the Frater Lucis found among the papers of Count Wilkorki “they must be free from physical defects - but the stipulation in the present case connotes something more than perfect limbs, this being insured already by the first condition (‘must be Master Masons’): it is possible that there is a sex-implicit.” Waite continues this theme, noting that their Royal Priest or Perfect Rosicrucian Degree “connotes Eucharistic procedure.” He further avers that it is “exceedingly doubtful” that the Frater Lucis ceased operations in the 1790s, and suggests that Der Signatstern, in the early 19th

Century, evidences a continuation of Order activity. It is true that the latter was, apparently, more a literary conservatorship than an active body, but many rites go through such periods. The very idea of such a conservatorship is to preserve intact a unique rite in a temporarily relatively dormant state. This brings us to the period when the Rites of Memphis & Misraim were emerging out of Cagliostro's androgynous Egyptian Rite (which are both antecedent bodies of OTO and absorbed much from earlier Masonic bodies), and not long before the time of P.B. Randolph, Hargrave Jennings or Kenneth Mackenzie.

(4) The latter (b. 1833 e.v.) was raised in Austria and appears to have been first exposed to Rosicrucian ideas there, according to some authorities. Randolph (b. 1825e.v.) was also absorbing (and influencing) European and Asiatic Rosicrucianism in the first half of the nineteenth century. By his own account, he became the Grand Master of the (Rosicrucian) Brotherhood of Eulis in 1846 e.v. In his secret teaching, taken up by the Davidson era H.B. of L., he says, "Neither the man nor the woman must be virginal or unsexed," which is reminiscent of the qualification imposed in the earlier *Fratres Lucis*. In the case of Randolph, the "sex implicit" is more a "sex explicit" if one reads his public work carefully, and utterly obvious from a reading of such private works as "The Anseretic Mysteries" and "Mysteries of Eulis."

(5) Dr. Randolph, indeed, suggests the formula of the Mass of the Holy Ghost so explicitly, that the quotation I most often cite has been edited out of some editions of his magnum opus, *Eulis*. One can find a very similar quotation in "The Mysteries of Eros" as reprinted far more recently by Godwin, Chanel and Deveney (*The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor*, p. 243). The direct quotation is taken from that of 1896, the third edition of *Eulis* from the Randolph Publishing Company. It is, therefore, an authorized edition. Randolph calls it "the first principle" and says:

"Fix this principle firmly in your memory, and roll it under the tongue of your clearest understanding; take it in the stomach of your spirit, digest it well, and assimilate its quintessence to, and with, your own soul. That principle is formulated thus: Love Lieth at the Foundation (of all that is); and Love is convertibly passion; enthusiasm; affection; heat; fire; soul; God. Master that."

One is free not to take this to refer intentionally to the Mass of the Holy Ghost. In the context of Randolph's overall work, other explanations appear unlikely.

(6) That Peter Davidson himself takes an early interest in occultism, and incorporates Randolph's work into his earliest associations with the H.B. of L. is beyond reasonable dispute. My own extensive direct contacts with the Davidson family demonstrate that. Davidson descendants generously provided me with a number of his letters and notebooks that establish his associations — from Papus to Hargrave Jennings — beginning quite early on. In its earliest form under Davidson, the 1st Degree of the H.B. of L. was called "Eulis" and its instructional text was Randolph's sexual magick treatise *Mysteries of Eulis*. That Davidson and his associates toned down the sexual element I do not dispute. But not really all that much. The H.B. of L. (Davidson) curriculum

continued to utilize modified Randolph teachings as late as Davidson's death in 1915 e.v. Davidson said, in an 1895 e.v. monograph,

Chakras II - by Fr. Parser Coaccidence "Love is the attunement and self completion of the dual forces; it is the union of corresponding opposites in the same substance, and sex has its origin in the very nature of God. Sex, says the Kabala, is the true God of Hosts; Sex, says the Egyptian Priest, is the true light of Wisdom; and knowledge of the Bisexual forces, says the Adept, is the only pathway to Spirit, the inner perception of which is that knowledge of the Soul of the Universe and the individual's own Higher Self, for only Soul can read Soul."

Surely, if Davidson had done more than interject a note of caution on the sexual aspect of Randolph's work, the modifications would simply not have done, for this was the core of Randolph's teaching. It emerges again in the strongly sexual doctrines of Max Theon, who was always Davidson's Chief, to the end of his life. According to Rene Guenon, "This Grand Master was Dr. Max Theon, who would later create and direct what was known as the 'Cosmic Movement.'" The last dozen years of Peter Davidson's life were devoted to promoting the Cosmic Movement, with a nod to Papus and the Martinist Order. Theon's concept of *pathetique*⁶ is a purely sexual magick Sri Aurobindo was moved to call "wholly Tantric."

(7) One can thus far pass by the mysterious Paulos Metamon only lightly, for a mysterious and influential figure he was indeed. It was he who influenced Madame Blavatsky in the 1840s, and introduced her to the H.B. of L. in 1870 (the year Randolph proclaimed the Brotherhood of Eulis as well). Metamon appears to have passed the Grand Mastership to Davidson and Theon. The former, in his turn, profoundly influenced Papus, a member of the Davidson H.B. of L. who called Davidson "one of the wisest of Western adepts, my Practical Master." Davidson represented the Martinist Order under Papus in the Georgia H.B. of L. colony during the "American period." It should go without saying that, as documented in my book and elsewhere, Papus and Reuss were formally and personally closely associated at the time the OTO was organized. This was the same period in which Papus and Davidson were associated. When the same time, the same people and the same ideas show up in and around the OTO in its formative period, circa 1894 - 1904 e.v.⁷, the evidence becomes more than circumstantial for direct continuity. At minimum, the continuity of ideas, aforementioned, and uniquely so, runs from one to the other in a fairly seamless fashion, allowing a bit for the fact that we are dealing with Victorian times and "secret" societies to begin with. In context, it is remarkable how much continuity can be shown, running from the Fratres Lucis, through Randolph, Davidson, Papus and Reuss, on to Aleister Crowley and his successors in OTO to the present day.

In summary, it appears that there is a parallel tradition running through the eighteenth century Fratres Lucis and Asiatic Brethren on the one hand, and Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite (androgynous) Freemasonry on the other. These fuse with primordial Egyptian traditions during the Napoleonic conquests in Egypt, passed on to Metamon, Theon, Levi, Randolph, Davidson and other nineteenth century luminaries, down to Papus,

Reuss, Kellner and, eventually, Aleister Crowley and his successors and heirs within OTO.

I would be remiss if I did not make a more kindly gesture to the critics. Although we reach somewhat different conclusions, we are united in making the painstaking effort to ferret out, as it were, the true history of “secret societies” which so often seem to enjoy mythos spinning (for a variety of reasons; some quite honorable, in my opinion) and secrecy itself. It hath its uses, but is, verily the bane of historians. Better still, I find they and I are part of a relatively rarefied breed. Such people are seekers of inner wisdom who do not disown trying to sort out some kind of coherent perspective on the history and ideas of the magical societies and fraternities that have, for so long, been viewed through the distorted lenses of sensationalism and rumor.

Obviously, I adjudge The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor and the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light, Brothers of Light, etc. to be, essentially, the same assemblage — but, again, it depends on what one accepts as “essential.” I don’t take a rigorous stance on lineal chartered continuity (although I consider there to be *prima facie* evidence for such here), which some apparently insist upon. History rarely runs in a seamless straight line. I think the line here is straighter than some critics recognize, and, as evidence continues to come in, I suspect I shall find little to regret in what I have said thus far.

END NOTES

1 For most purposes in this context, “light” (from the Middle English; d English *leoht* or *liht*), and Luxor (Egyptian Thebes, but in practice i obvious reference to Latin *lux*, or “light”), and Lucis (again Latin for “light”) are all variations of the same concept of illumination.

2 One of the most interesting is G.B. Smith. Smith is highly critical of OTO and of our own work, but curiously provides the best evidence we have thus far found for a direct linkage between the unorthodox ecstatic Jewish sect of the Zoharists and the currents discussed in this paper. According to Smith, Thomas von Schoenfeld, also known as Mosheh Dobruschka and a cousin of Jacob Frank, was both an outstanding leader of the Frankist sect and a seminal figure in the creation of the Qabalistic character of the Fraters Lucis, or Asiatic Brethren. See my paper, “The Frankist Ecstatics of the Eighteenth Century” in *Agape V1N2*. The Frankists or Zoharists, we should remember, engaged in a form of sacred sexuality as part of their basic custom.

3 The same reference appears in Cagliostro’s “Catechism of Master of the Egyptian Lodge.”

4 “How open the physical nature of ‘the Grail’ still was in c. 1200, when Wolfram embarked on his *Parzival*, is shown by the fact that his Grail - he calls it ‘Gral’ - was a Stone...” The root question here is too complex for a note. “Gral” may relate to the ME/OF “gravele” or small, hard stone. The Graal is both a sacred stone and a chalice. Sometimes it refers to a specific flesh-colored stone, carnelian, defined by American Heritage as “a pale to deep red or reddish-brown variety of clear chalcedony, used in jewelry. [Middle English *corneline*, from Old French, from *cornel*, *cornel*, from Latin *cornus*]. The “white stone” could be the “white carnal substance” or semen. This is

reflected in the cornucopia, at once “horn of plenty” and fleshly womb from which all living things enter the world.

“The stone before it wholly part with its blackness and become white, like most shining polished marble or a naked brandished sword, will put on all colors that can be imagined” Dr. Sigismon Bacstrom, MD, The Seven Egyptian Seals.

“.... the Circle of White Light, being the revelation of the nature of the self. The Fish is freed from its spatial-temporal bonds, and the Heart is now void of passion. The Circle of Light is the White Stone, the Immortal Foetus in Taoism, the Seed Indestructible, the Wing Recovered. Vitality recovered, the Elixir prepared, the Light soars up to the Original Cavity of the Spirit and manifests brightly between the eyes. This is the Leap into the Void, the Re-Absorption into the One.....” W.H. Mueller, Polaria (p. 107-8)

5 “Prester John” is the mythic king and priest first mentioned by Bishop Otto, of Freising (1145 e.v.). Prester John was said to be a Nestorian Christian living in the East. The story seems to originate in the Christian communities of Asia and Ethiopia that became cut off from the Christian West both physically and ideologically after the Fall of Rome and the spread of Islam. The legend took on fabulous properties during the Middle Ages in Europe.

6 The Revue Cosmique, published in France by Theon and in America and Britain by Davidson, makes clear that union pathetique refers to sexual fusion of a man and woman under idealized circumstances.

7 That is, the time betwixt the first meeting between Reuss and Kellner discussing a school of Masonic ideas, through the ‘inner circle’ period within the Reuss Masonic body, and subsequent public announcement of what was to be called the Ordo Templi Orientis subsequent to the time of Kellner’s final illness.

FOR FURTHER READING

The Hermetic Botherhood of Luxor By Joscelyn Godwin, John Patrick Deveney and Christian Chanel (Weiser, 1995)

The Story of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light By T Allen Greenfield (Looking Glass Press, 1997)

Cagliostro’s Secret Ritual of Egyptian Rite Freemasonry (Kessinger, n.d.)

Masonry and Medieval Mysticism By Isabel Cooper-Oakley (Kessinger, n.d. Original publication 1900)

Rituals of the Fratres Lucis (Kessinger, n.d.)

Dark Knights of the Solar Cross By Geoffrey Basil Smith (Logos Press, 1997)

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A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry By A.E. Waite (Wings Books, 1996 Edition) Entry, Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, pp 349-350.

The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross By A.E. Waite (Barnes & Noble Edition, 1993) Entry, “Fratres Lucis” pp. 503-528

The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia By Kenneth Mackenzie (Aquarian Press Edition, 1987) Entry, “Light, Brothers of” and “Asia, Knights and Brothers of”

Bacstrom's Alchemical Encyclopedia, Edited By J.W. Hamilton-Jones (Kessinger, n.d.) Entry, "The Seven Egyptian Seals" p. 122.

Many other references and source documents may be located in these citations. Of the "references" we obviously give more credence to Mackenzie, as his sympathies were with - not against - occultism.

Return to Table of ContentsHERMETIC BROTHERHOOD REVISITED

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The extremely important history of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light, or Luxor¹, also known simply as the "H.B. of L." had been nearly forgotten by modern occultists after the turn of the twentieth century, but more especially in the wake of the "second occult revival" in the 1960s and '70s. Then Joscelyn Godwin et al began research for their work on the subject, *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor* (Weiser, 1995). At about the same period, I also embarked upon investigations for a book on the same theme, published as *The Story of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light* (Looking Glass Press, 1996). In some of its earliest literature, the then Grand Master of OTO, Dr. Reuss, had identified the OTO with this Hermetic Brotherhood. Aleister Crowley extolled that venerable repository of insight as one of the bodies from which the OTO claimed to derive its "knowledge and wisdom." There seemed to be an obvious correlative connection to Dr. P.B. Randolph's Brotherhood of Eulis, but the nature of that connection was tenuous as recently as the 1980s.

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One is, of course, quite free to interpret “white stone” and “hidden manna” as one chooses⁴; but the coincident citations are nonetheless remarkable. They both derive, of course, from the book of Revelations, Chapter 2, verse 17: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”

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It is a venerable formula, perhaps with reference to the medieval mythos of Prester John⁵, and incorporated into the Fraters Lucis or Brothers of Light, and then to the OTO, the initials of which do, after all, stand for “Order of Oriental Templars.”

The point I make in The Story of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light is that the continuity of ideas and similarity of names among a variety of groups — particularly when those ideas and names are unique in the Western World — suggest continuity of organization. A “paper trail” may be lacking, or overlaps of membership are not always noted — though both of these factors are also present much of the time — but the continuity is glaringly obvious nonetheless.

(3) The thing that makes the OTO unique is that it teaches a form of sexual magick which seems to arise semi-independently of Eastern (“Tantric”) Schools of a somewhat similar nature. Of the eighteenth century Frater Lucis, even A.E. Waite — no friend of sexual magick — notes of membership qualification, referring to the rituals of the Frater Lucis found among the papers of Count Wilkorki “they must be free from physical defects - but the stipulation in the present case connotes something more than perfect limbs, this being insured already by the first condition (‘must be Master Masons’): it is possible that there is a sex-implicit.” Waite continues this theme, noting that their Royal Priest or Perfect Rosicrucian Degree “connotes Eucharistic procedure.” He further avers that it is “exceedingly doubtful” that the Frater Lucis ceased operations in the 1790s, and suggests that Der Signatstern, in the early 19th Century, evidences a continuation of Order activity. It is true that the latter was, apparently, more a literary conservatorship than an active body, but many rites go through such periods. The very idea of such a conservatorship is to preserve intact a unique rite in a temporarily relatively dormant state. This brings us to the period when the Rites of Memphis & Misraim were emerging out of Cagliostro’s androgynous Egyptian Rite (which are both antecedent bodies of OTO and absorbed much from earlier Masonic bodies), and not long before the time of P.B. Randolph, Hargrave Jennings or Kenneth Mackenzie.

(4) The latter (b. 1833 e.v.) was raised in Austria and appears to have been first exposed to Rosicrucian ideas there, according to some authorities. Randolph (b. 1825e.v.) was also absorbing (and influencing) European and Asiatic Rosicrucianism in the first half of the nineteenth century. By his own account, he became the Grand Master of the (Rosicrucian) Brotherhood of Eulis in 1846 e.v. In his secret teaching, taken up by the Davidson era H.B. of L., he says, “Neither the man nor the woman must

be virginal or unsexed,” which is reminiscent of the qualification imposed in the earlier *Fratres Lucis*. In the case of Randolph, the “sex implicit” is more a “sex explicit” if one reads his public work carefully, and utterly obvious from a reading of such private works as “The Anseretic Mysteries” and “Mysteries of Eulis.”

(5) Dr. Randolph, indeed, suggests the formula of the Mass of the Holy Ghost so explicitly, that the quotation I most often cite has been edited out of some editions of his magnum opus, *Eulis*. One can find a very similar quotation in “The Mysteries of Eros” as reprinted far more recently by Godwin, Chanel and Deveney (*The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor*, p. 243). The direct quotation is taken from that of 1896, the third edition of *Eulis* from the Randolph Publishing Company. It is, therefore, an authorized edition. Randolph calls it “the first principle” and says:

“Fix this principle firmly in your memory, and roll it under the tongue of your clearest understanding; take it in the stomach of your spirit, digest it well, and assimilate its quintessence to, and with, your own soul. That principle is formulated thus: Love Lieth at the Foundation (of all that is); and Love is convertibly passion; enthusiasm; affection; heat; fire; soul; God. Master that.”

One is free not to take this to refer intentionally to the Mass of the Holy Ghost. In the context of Randolph’s overall work, other explanations appear unlikely.

(6) That Peter Davidson himself takes an early interest in occultism, and incorporates Randolph’s work into his earliest associations with the H.B. of L. is beyond reasonable dispute. My own extensive direct contacts with the Davidson family demonstrate that. Davidson descendants generously provided me with a number of his letters and notebooks that establish his associations — from Papus to Hargrave Jennings — beginning quite early on. In its earliest form under Davidson, the 1st Degree of the H.B. of L. was called “Eulis” and its instructional text was Randolph’s sexual magick treatise *Mysteries of Eulis*. That Davidson and his associates toned down the sexual element I do not dispute. But not really all that much. The H.B. of L. (Davidson) curriculum continued to utilize modified Randolph teachings as late as Davidson’s death in 1915 e.v. Davidson said, in an 1895 e.v. monograph,

Chakras II - by Fr. Parser Coaccidence “Love is the attunement and self completion of the dual forces; it is the union of corresponding opposites in the same substance, and sex has its origin in the very nature of God. Sex, says the Kabala, is the true God of Hosts; Sex, says the Egyptian Priest, is the true light of Wisdom; and knowledge of the Bisexual forces, says the Adept, is the only pathway to Spirit, the inner perception of which is that knowledge of the Soul of the Universe and the individual’s own Higher Self, for only Soul can read Soul.”

Surely, if Davidson had done more than interject a note of caution on the sexual aspect of Randolph’s work, the modifications would simply not have done, for this was the core of Randolph’s teaching. It emerges again in the strongly sexual doctrines of Max Theon, who was always Davidson’s Chief, to the end of his life. According to Rene Guenon,

“This Grand Master was Dr. Max Theon, who would later create and direct what was known as the ‘Cosmic Movement.’” The last dozen years of Peter Davidson’s life were devoted to promoting the Cosmic Movement, with a nod to Papus and the Martinist Order. Theon’s concept of *pathetique*⁶ is a purely sexual magick Sri Aurobindo was moved to call “wholly Tantric.”

(7) One can thus far pass by the mysterious Paulos Metamon only lightly, for a mysterious and influential figure he was indeed. It was he who influenced Madame Blavatsky in the 1840s, and introduced her to the H.B. of L. in 1870 (the year Randolph proclaimed the Brotherhood of Eulis as well). Metamon appears to have passed the Grand Mastership to Davidson and Theon. The former, in his turn, profoundly influenced Papus, a member of the Davidson H.B. of L. who called Davidson “one of the wisest of Western adepts, my Practical Master.” Davidson represented the Martinist Order under Papus in the Georgia H.B. of L. colony during the “American period.” It should go without saying that, as documented in my book and elsewhere, Papus and Reuss were formally and personally closely associated at the time the OTO was organized. This was the same period in which Papus and Davidson were associated. When the same time, the same people and the same ideas show up in and around the OTO in its formative period, circa 1894 - 1904 e.v.⁷, the evidence becomes more than circumstantial for direct continuity. At minimum, the continuity of ideas, aforementioned, and uniquely so, runs from one to the other in a fairly seamless fashion, allowing a bit for the fact that we are dealing with Victorian times and “secret” societies to begin with. In context, it is remarkable how much continuity can be shown, running from the *Fratres Lucis*, through Randolph, Davidson, Papus and Reuss, on to Aleister Crowley and his successors in OTO to the present day.

In summary, it appears that there is a parallel tradition running through the eighteenth century *Fratres Lucis* and Asiatic Brethren on the one hand, and Cagliostro’s Egyptian Rite (androgynous) Freemasonry on the other. These fuse with primordial Egyptian traditions during the Napoleonic conquests in Egypt, passed on to Metamon, Theon, Levi, Randolph, Davidson and other nineteenth century luminaries, down to Papus, Reuss, Kellner and, eventually, Aleister Crowley and his successors and heirs within OTO.

I would be remiss if I did not make a more kindly gesture to the critics. Although we reach somewhat different conclusions, we are united in making the painstaking effort to ferret out, as it were, the true history of “secret societies” which so often seem to enjoy mythos spinning (for a variety of reasons; some quite honorable, in my opinion) and secrecy itself. It hath its uses, but is, verily the bane of historians. Better still, I find they and I are part of a relatively rarefied breed. Such people are seekers of inner wisdom who do not disown trying to sort out some kind of coherent perspective on the history and ideas of the magical societies and fraternities that have, for so long, been viewed through the distorted lenses of sensationalism and rumor.

Obviously, I adjudge The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor and the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light, Brothers of Light, etc. to be, essentially, the same assemblage — but, again,

it depends on what one accepts as “essential.” I don’t take a rigorous stance on lineal chartered continuity (although I consider there to be prima facie evidence for such here), which some apparently insist upon. History rarely runs in a seamless straight line. I think the line here is straighter than some critics recognize, and, as evidence continues to come in, I suspect I shall find little to regret in what I have said thus far.

END NOTES

1 For most purposes in this context, “light” (from the Middle English; d English leoht or liht), and Luxor (Egyptian Thebes, but in practice i obvious reference to Latin lux, or “light”), and Lucis (again Latin for “light”) are all variations of the same concept of illumination.

2 One of the most interesting is G.B. Smith. Smith is highly critical of OTO and of our own work, but curiously provides the best evidence we have thus far found for a direct linkage between the unorthodox ecstatic Jewish sect of the Zoharists and the currents discussed in this paper. According to Smith, Thomas von Schoenfeld, also known as Mosheh Dobruschka and a cousin of Jacob Frank, was both an outstanding leader of the Frankist sect and a seminal figure in the creation of the Qabalistic character of the Fraters Lucis, or Asiatic Brethren. See my paper, “The Frankist Ecstasies of the Eighteenth Century” in Agape V1N2. The Frankists or Zoharists, we should remember, engaged in a form of sacred sexuality as part of their basic custom.

3 The same reference appears in Cagliostro’s “Catechism of Master of the Egyptian Lodge.”

4 “How open the physical nature of ‘the Grail’ still was in c. 1200, when Wolfram embarked on his Parzival, is shown by the fact that his Grail - he calls it ‘Gral’ - was a Stone...” The root question here is too complex for a note. “Gral” may relate to the ME/OF “gravele” or small, hard stone. The Graal is both a sacred stone and a chalice. Sometimes it refers to a specific flesh-colored stone, carnelian, defined by American Heritage as “a pale to deep red or reddish-brown variety of clear chalcedony, used in jewelry. [Middle English corneline, from Old French, from cornel, cornel, from Latin cornus]. The “white stone” could be the “white carnal substance” or semen. This is reflected in the cornucopia, at once “horn of plenty” and fleshly womb from which all living things enter the world.

“The stone before it wholly part with its blackness and become white, like most shining polished marble or a naked brandished sword, will put on all colors that can be imagined” Dr. Sigismon Bacstrom, MD, The Seven Egyptian Seals.

“.... the Circle of White Light, being the revelation of the nature of the self. The Fish is freed from its spatial-temporal bonds, and the Heart is now void of passion. The Circle of Light is the White Stone, the Immortal Foetus in Taoism, the Seed Indestructible, the Wing Recovered. Vitality recovered, the Elixir prepared, the Light soars up to the Original Cavity of the Spirit and manifests brightly between the eyes. This is the Leap into the Void, the Re-Absorption into the One.....” W.H. Mueller, Polaria (p. 107-8)

5 “Prester John” is the mythic king and priest first mentioned by Bishop Otto, of Freising (1145 e.v.). Prester John was said to be a Nestorian Christian living in the East.

The story seems to originate in the Christian communities of Asia and Ethiopia that became cut off from the Christian West both physically and ideologically after the Fall of Rome and the spread of Islam. The legend took on fabulous properties during the Middle Ages in Europe.

6 The *Revue Cosmique*, published in France by Theon and in America and Britain by Davidson, makes clear that *union pathétique* refers to sexual fusion of a man and woman under idealized circumstances.

7 That is, the time betwixt the first meeting between Reuss and Kellner discussing a school of Masonic ideas, through the 'inner circle' period within the Reuss Masonic body, and subsequent public announcement of what was to be called the *Ordo Templi Orientis* subsequent to the time of Kellner's final illness.

FOR FURTHER READING

The Hermetic Botherhood of Luxor By Joscelyn Godwin, John Patrick Deveney and Christian Chanel (Weiser, 1995)

The Story of the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light By T Allen Greenfield (Looking Glass Press, 1997)

Cagliostro's Secret Ritual of Egyptian Rite Freemasonry (Kessinger, n.d.)

Masonry and Medieval Mysticism By Isabel Cooper-Oakley (Kessinger, n.d. Original publication 1900)

Rituals of the *Fratres Lucis* (Kessinger, n.d.)

Dark Knights of the Solar Cross By Geoffrey Basil Smith (Logos Press, 1997)

REFERENCES

A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry By A.E. Waite (Wings Books, 1996 Edition) Entry, Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, pp 349-350.

The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross By A.E. Waite (Barnes & Noble Edition, 1993) Entry, "*Fratres Lucis*" pp. 503-528

The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia By Kenneth Mackenzie (Aquarian Press Edition, 1987) Entry, "*Light, Brothers of*" and "*Asia, Knights and Brothers of*"

Bacstrom's Alchemical Encyclopedia, Edited By J.W. Hamilton-Jones (Kessinger, n.d.) Entry, "*The Seven Egyptian Seals*" p. 122.

Many other references and source documents may be located in these citations. Of the "references" we obviously give more credence to Mackenzie, as his sympathies were with - not against - occultism.

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A Mess of Sigils

by Bruce Kroeze

"For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is in every way perfect." -AL I.44

The use of sigilized statements of desire is perhaps the simplest, quickest and most effective technique in the modern magician's armory. However, this method has a glaring flaw. How is the mage to get around the lust of result that goes hand-in-hand

with the creation of the sigil? This paper gives a method I have found useful for circumventing this inconvenient limit.

The creation of a sigil is a simple and interesting exercise. At its most basic, the worker writes down a statement of desire, phrased as a positive. If there is any doubt about the proper way to phrase your desire, consultation of any of the huge pile of new-age dreck written about “affirmations” will shortly remedy any confusion. Do not buy these books, just read them at a bookstore as the idea is - necessarily - very simple.

Once a satisfactory statement has been selected, the magician reduces it to a form where he no longer consciously recognizes its meaning. This is quite entertaining, and endless variations of this reduction process can be invented to amuse the creative sigil-mage. Note the light-hearted tone of the process here. The avoidance of result-lust begins with laughter. Work with the sigil until you find an aesthetic symmetry and simplicity that you feel comfortable with.

Once the sigil is complete and ready for activation, copy it to a piece of paper and put it away for a while. I put mine in a little “sigil-pot”, where I store all “passive” sigils. If you create ten or so sigils at one time, or over a short period, then wait a couple weeks, you should find that you have no sure conscious idea which sigil is which. This helps get rid of desire because it is quite difficult to simultaneously lust for the fulfillment of ten desires.

Put your sigil pot somewhere where you will see it occasionally. Then forget about sigils entirely for a couple weeks. Then, one day when it occurs to you “out of the blue,” a sure sign that you are ready to activate, randomly pick a sigil. It is normal for the remembering process to begin right away but it is easy to deal with this problem. Simply tell yourself, “Oh, it doesn’t matter.” This normally stops the process in the bud; if it does not, put the sigil down and wait a while longer.

Activating a sigil is done by achieving some state of gnosis while concentrating on the sigil’s image, words and/or sounds. I suggest that the magician vary the techniques used to accomplish the charge, as some will be found to work much better than others. Even when a favorite technique has been found, it is still valuable to vary the approach now and again, as the “best” technique may change over time.

After the sigil is charged, it should be destroyed. This should be a physical and mental destruction. Burning a piece of paper is easy, but deliberately losing a memory less so. I have found the practice of simply saying to myself “I don’t need to remember that right now” to be extremely effective. More aggressive efforts at forgetting usually fail for me, but a few repetitions of “I don’t need...” usually cause the sigil to be gone in short order.

It is difficult to reconcile this need to forget with another obligation of a magician, which is to document her work. I compromise by quickly writing the time and circumstances of the activation (but not any image of the sigil), then doing something mentally distracting such as playing a computer game.

After you have activated the final sigil, wait a couple days for full memory loss. Then, you are finally free to look back over your records & check for results. You will certainly find some obvious and powerful activations working in your life. Of course, a journal is vital for the final step in the sigilizing process. It acts as your last line of defense against Lust of Result by enabling you to get through the temptation to re-interpret your recent experiences.

“So the Wise Man acteth without lust of result;
achieveth and boasteth not; he willeth not to proclaim his greatness.”

– Tao Te King, Crowley translation, 77:4.

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[Jewels from the Naked Brilliance](#)

[Disciples of the Scorpion](#)

by Soror Nephthys

A situation of grave proportions has been developing over the last few years. More and more, the news covers stories of the atrocities committed by children. People keep asking why this is happening and how they can stop it while the answer is right in front of them: it is given to them each time they hear another tale of violence. While Neptune is usually given the rap for deceit and blindness, this time our friend Poseidon is not to blame. His watery relative, Pluto, as well as his father, Uranus, are responsible for the terrors that grow each day around the world, as well as the cloak of darkness that continually surrounds issues that no one wants to think about: that which is right in front of our face is always the hardest to see. Pluto and Uranus are the planets that Rule and Exalt, respectively, the sign of Scorpio, that of death, change, regeneration, sex, and transformation. The children born between 1974 and 1995 are the purveyors of Scorpio's message that it's time to change or the consequences for us all will be quite dire.

Pluto, Uranus, and Scorpio all revolve around issues that involve the primordial soup of both our bodies and souls: what are we doing here? What are we supposed to do while we're here? What's going to happen after we're done here? The very bottom line of situations becomes quite apparent to the people with these planetary placements: they were born with the ultimate bullshit detector. Obviously, a world and society in which lying and deception are the name of the game is unpalatable to these new souls, to say the least. They see through and strip away the lies and layers of disguise placed over most complex issues. These issues are the same ones Scorpio is concerned with: sex, death, drugs, 'god', money, and anything else that makes us humans squirm when personal beliefs are challenged. Scorpio is fearless. That's what makes it so truthful, and so dangerous. Everything that global society has tried to ignore for the last 248 years, the length of Pluto's year or revolution around the Sun, will no longer be able to hide beneath morals, ethics, law, or propriety. Scorpio wants to know the truth, and so will the people that possess its power.

Ya Alim - by Aisha Qadisha

Pluto is the planet that has been attributed to the Sephirah Kether in modern times; some also attribute Uranus to Daath, or the Abyss. Uranus, and Daath, both say the same thing: change, or teeter on the edge of the Abyss forever, or worse, become trapped within it forever. Pluto and Kether say the same thing: you are the mirror which provides the answers to the questions you ask. Refuse to look at what is in front of you and you will remain where you stand, unmoving, non-evolving. These Scorpionic children are the mirrors into which we are having to look and see reflected all of the prejudicial, restrictive, torturous, and otherwise Will-crushing things that have gone in our world for the last 250 years. Their behaviors are the product of those same events.

Try to envision the life view of a person who was born in or after 1974: what have their examples been of the world around them? 1974, though they would not remember these events, saw the resignation of a United States President, and the beginning of the end of the Vietnam "War". A few years later, the Iran Hostage Crisis was all the news. After that, AIDS, the Cold War (remember The Day After?), and the Iran Contra Scandal. Besides the splattered headlines, numerous social issues that have resulted in violence are a part of everyday life for children of this generation: homosexuality, abortion, nuclear war, environmentalism, overpopulation, racism, etc. It's very confusing to go to school, read your history books, and learn about things like the Civil Rights Movement and great leaders like Dr. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and the things that all of those people struggled for, and then take a good, hard look outside at the world and realize that not much has changed. On the surface it appears that way: bold laws stand in the books to protect people's life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, but it's so obvious that it doesn't work like that. "I love my country, but I fear my government" may be the mantra for this 21 year generation of people as they are presented with more and more examples of how justice is not justice, democracy is not democracy, and equality is not equality, not in their world anyway. Now envision the future life view of a child born in the early 1990s: what do you suppose their opinion of their world will be? What should they be told when they ask why they can't go outside because the UV index is too high, or the ozone levels? What should they be told when they ask why all those people on the other side of the world are fighting? What should they be told when the nice man down the street who never did anything wrong was taken away by the police because of the plants in his garage? What do you suppose they'll think of the answers?

You're probably still wondering why it is that some of these kids have chosen to use violence to send a message that they may not even aware of. Scorpio is a water sign, making it very emotional in nature. Scorpio's inherent sight into what makes the world go round also makes it psychic and empathic: these kids, for the most part, have absorbed so much negative energy since their birth that it's all they know how to express. They've seen and received nothing truly good and nurturing in their lives. Our society demands that both parents work, if there are two parents present. Some programs exist in urban areas to help kids find other things to do after school or in the summertime when they can't be around their parents, but the Latchkey Generation is

largely left on its own. What becomes the usual substitute? You guessed it: The One-Eyed Zombie God: the usual broadcast garbage, video games, etc. Parents wonder why their children are drawn to this stuff: it's because it's all they know. If they watch the news, that feeling is compounded because what the anchor tells them is this is the way the world is. Some of our young Scorpions truly believe that the only way to get what they want in the world is through violence, and they cannot be blamed because there have been no other examples for them to go on. Death and violence are all they understand: most of the kids responsible for the school killings begged to be killed themselves once wrestled to the ground. To make their lives even harder, families have been shown to be increasingly dysfunctional these days: incest, physical abuse, alcoholism, the list goes on. Stories of such atrocities are no longer regarded with horror by others: they've become so commonplace that the sentiment is more one of 'join the club.' This is the other source of negative energy and violence that kids are exposed to.

It's periods in history and events such as the school massacres that give Scorpio its bad reputation: the bad that precedes the good is often so scarring that the eventual benefit that is reaped cannot be truly utilized for generations. But when Scorpio's energy is properly channeled and has enough force behind it, nothing can stand in its revolutionary path. The fall of the Iron Curtain is a prime example. These events occurred as Pluto passed through the middle, and most powerful, degrees of Scorpio. Those peoples who had been oppressed for so many decades said, "NO MORE!" and gradually they regained their freedom. It has been more peaceful in some places than in others, but the Iron Curtain is no more. It is also interesting to note that the Solidarity movement in Poland, generally thought to be the first domino to fall in that particular series of events in Europe, achieved its success as Pluto entered Scorpio in the early 80s. As Pluto left Scorpio in the mid 90s, the primary skirmish still existing rested in the former Yugoslavia: this is the country from whence the individual came that performed the assassination that began World War I, continued with WW II, and the ultimate subsequent raising of the Iron Curtain. Pluto's pass through Scorpio changed the face of Europe back to a state that, perhaps, will resolve the original conflict and allow that part of the world to evolve the way it's supposed to. In this way, Pluto is sort of like a time machine: it forces individuals, societies, governments, and every other group of people to face what has happened in the past so that it can be resolved and evolution can continue.

Those born with Uranus in Scorpio are between the ages of 16 and 21 now. This is the generation that is going to rebel against anything they think stifles their individuality. Uranus says, "Thou shalt not tell me what to do." They are not going to care, for the most part, what society thinks of them or how they lead their lives. Like everything else, this has a positive and a negative side. Positively expressed, this group of people has the power to make some mighty changes in this world of ours, and they're likely to strip away some long-held beliefs and illusions that will make a lot of folks very uncomfortable and unhappy. Properly encouraged, they'll be extremely intelligent: this may very well be the generation that breaches the gap between the tangible scientific and the intangible ethereal, for they are concerned with both sides of reality. They have the ability, for whatever reason, be it astrological or parenting, to make themselves just

acceptable enough to others to make a life for themselves and survive long enough to implement their own plans: Scorpio does not make a compromise unless it's got another reason for doing so.

Negatively expressed, these are the kids who have run away from home and now can't feed themselves because they absolutely refuse to make any sort of compromise, even if it's for their own good. Society doesn't like walking down the street and seeing these kids or being bothered for change by them, and thinks, "Clean up. Get a job. Make something of yourself." It's that horridly truthful face of Scorpio that generates that reaction in ourselves: we don't want to look at it because deep down inside we know that they can't survive in the world that's been created for them. They see straight through the lies and the bull and find it impossible to tolerate, and their life circumstances to date have left them unequipped emotionally and mentally to think of another way to do things. All their lives they have been completely out of control and now they are controlling it in the only way they know how because they've never learned anything else. Uranus also controls trends in society: this group of people bands together and finds comfort in large groups, regardless of their living conditions. It is the companionship, however dysfunctional, more than anything else that keeps them alive.

The Pluto-In-Scorpio generation is between the ages of 2 and 14 now. These kids will not seek solace in groups as the Uranus-in-Scorpio generation does. They will be fiercely individualistic not because they want to be, but because they have to be. Why? Because they won't be able to tolerate the falseness of most of the people around them. They will likely have some trouble with their parents once the first Jupiter return has passed at the age of 12, a marker of social breaking away from the parents. With these kids, they will be a society of one if they have to. Connections they make with others will likely be sparse, but those that they make will be very deep, and they will forever change the lives of those that they choose to commune with. Since they will spend a great deal of time by themselves largely, and that will usually be their choice, they'll formulate their opinions of the world by absorbing what's around them and analyzing them for what they really are without the influence of other's opinions and demands. If they grow up in a household where people are truthful and try not to let falseness enter their lives, they will likely become revolutionary leaders just like their Uranian group-counterparts. They'll understand that anger is necessary, but it need not lead to violence for things to change. If they grow up in a household where lies and misdirected anger are the norm, they have the potential to explosively reflect that energy back upon the world, and it will not be pretty. It hasn't been so far.

This generation of kids is the world's wake up call. Any amount of death, carnage, and hatred that people today are familiar with will pale in comparison to what can potentially come if we, as a global people, do not open our eyes and see what's going on, and why! Trans-formation and revolution from the Father and Son pair of Uranus and Pluto are not pleasant: they have a tendency to take away from us what we don't need whether we want it to go or not. This is different from Saturn, who just gives us a hefty warning: it is possible to ignore the Father of Discipline. It is not possible to ignore his

more powerful counterparts. The more we try, the worse the situation becomes. So, we as an entire planet stand at the brink of the Abyss: do we continue battling each other over land, money, and 'god' until half of us are gone? Or do we dare jump across, which requires that we all hold hands together, take a deep breath, and know that what's on the other side really is better?

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Holy Cow Fiesta!

by Soror Sulis

(An outdoor carnivorous, cholesterol-laden Feast of the Times celebrated at the Summer Solstice.)

Celebrants:

Ra – in Egyptian dress

Ahathoor – in Leopard aspect

The People – in whatever it is their will to wear!

Props:

- The Holy Cow – in a bovine piñata with a gold paper solar disk inserted between the horns. It is filled with such things as reflect the solar nature of the holiday...lemon drops, gold-wrapped chocolate coins etc.
- A litter decorated with flowers, real or paper.
- A decorated baton to break the pinata
- A hoodwink or blindfold
- A rope and a tree (heh, heh, this IS Texas!)
- The Bark of the Sun with 6 candles and a lighter

The Feast for and by the People:

- Beef
- Cheese
- Round Loaves of Bread
- Yellow and Orange Things – squash, corn, carrots, sweet potatoes, curries, etc.
- Ice Cream
- Cheesecake
- Red Beer or other red beverage

The Ritual:

Let the Holy Cow be borne with honor on a flower decked litter! Three times let her be carried around deosil, coming to rest at the throne in the south, under a large tree. Let her be placed on the altar at the feet of the Ahathoor, who shall mark the Cow with the Eye of Ra.

Ra shall bear the bark of the sun from the east to the south, three candles lit and

lighting two more as he goes. Let the drums be played as he travels, increasing in tempo from moderate to fast as he approaches the Eye of God, ceasing as he arrives. Upon the arrival of Ra at the throne, let him place the bark of the sun on the altar and make the sign of Vir whilst declaring:

Hail unto thee who art Ahathoor in Thy triumphing
Even unto thee who art Ahathoor in Thy beauty,
Who travelest over the heavens in Thy bark at the Mid-Course of the Sun.
Tahuti standeth in his splendor at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm.
Hail unto thee from the abodes of morning!

Ahathoor returns the sign while Ra lights the final candle. The drums begin again, slowly. Then shall Ahathoor and Ra throw a rope over a branch of the tree and tie one end to the Holy Cow and hoist her up. At this sign, let there be loud rejoicing! The altar, litter and bark shall be removed to the side (Note...this is a good time to extinguish the candles)

The people shall approach the Holy Cow each in turn with the baton and shall be hoodwinked and allowed three swings until there comes One who shall strike the Holy Cow and burst it asunder, showering forth Her goodness to all below!

Then shall the fiesta begin! Let the bounty of the Cow in the Sun be revealed in the feasting thereof!

Beauty and strength, leaping laughter and delicious languor,
force and fire, are of us. AL: II:20

Also by Sulis in this issue: The Duality of Hathor

[Return to Table of Contents](#)THELEMIC CULTURE PART III

Holy Cow Fiesta!

by Soror Sulis

(An outdoor carnivorous, cholesterol-laden Feast of the Times celebrated at the Summer Solstice.)

Celebrants:

Ra – in Egyptian dress

Ahathoor – in Leopard aspect

The People – in whatever it is their will to wear!

Props:

- The Holy Cow – in a bovine piñata with a gold paper solar disk inserted between the horns. It is filled with such things as reflect the solar nature of the holiday...lemon drops, gold-wrapped chocolate coins etc.
- A litter decorated with flowers, real or paper.
- A decorated baton to break the pinata
- A hoodwink or blindfold

- A rope and a tree (heh, heh, this IS Texas!)
- The Bark of the Sun with 6 candles and a lighter

The Feast for and by the People:

- Beef
- Cheese
- Round Loaves of Bread
- Yellow and Orange Things – squash, corn, carrots, sweet potatoes, curries, etc.
- Ice Cream
- Cheesecake
- Red Beer or other red beverage

The Ritual:

Let the Holy Cow be borne with honor on a flower decked litter! Three times let her be carried around deosil, coming to rest at the throne in the south, under a large tree. Let her be placed on the altar at the feet of the Ahathoor, who shall mark the Cow with the Eye of Ra.

Ra shall bear the bark of the sun from the east to the south, three candles lit and lighting two more as he goes. Let the drums be played as he travels, increasing in tempo from moderate to fast as he approaches the Eye of God, ceasing as he arrives. Upon the arrival of Ra at the throne, let him place the bark of the sun on the altar and make the sign of Vir whilst declaring:

Hail unto thee who art Ahathoor in Thy triumphing
 Even unto thee who art Ahathoor in Thy beauty,
 Who travelest over the heavens in Thy bark at the Mid-Course of the Sun.
 Tahuti standeth in his splendor at the prow, and Ra-Hoor abideth at the helm.
 Hail unto thee from the abodes of morning!

Ahathoor returns the sign while Ra lights the final candle. The drums begin again, slowly. Then shall Ahathoor and Ra throw a rope over a branch of the tree and tie one end to the Holy Cow and hoist her up. At this sign, let there be loud rejoicing! The altar, litter and bark shall be removed to the side (Note...this is a good time to extinguish the candles)

The people shall approach the Holy Cow each in turn with the baton and shall be hoodwinked and allowed three swings until there comes One who shall strike the Holy Cow and burst it asunder, showering forth Her goodness to all below!

Then shall the fiesta begin! Let the bounty of the Cow in the Sun be revealed in the feasting thereof!

Beauty and strength, leaping laughter and delicious languor,
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[Return to Table of Contents](#)The Duality of Hathor

by Soror Sulis

Hathor is the daughter of Ra, and is given the honorary title of The Eye of Ra. In her benign bovine form, she is honored from India to Egypt. However, she has a more terrifying aspect, that of Sekmet, her leonine form.

In the many variations of the Book of the Dead, scrolls buried with the dead as instructions on navigating the Underworld. The Book of the Celestial Cow describes the dualistic nature of Hathor in a most vivid tale.

Ra had heard that humankind was up to some mischief, and he sent Hathor to investigate. In her Sekmet form, she ravaged the population until the humans cried out for mercy, which in no way abated her debauch. Alarmed at her fury, the council of the gods sent Thoth to solve the problem. He waited until the heat of the day and a full stomach made Hathor collapse from the exhaustion of her bloodlust. He gathered a large quantity of beer and mixed it with red ocher so that it resembled blood. It was then poured on the ground until the streets appeared to be a river of blood. When Hathor/Sekmet awoke, her bloodlust returned at the sight of the red liquid, and she drank and drank until she fell into an inebriated stupor. Thus she could be finally overcome and returned to her home to calm down.

Festivals of Hathor are typically celebrated with a red beer in her honor.

Also by Sulis in this issue: [The Holy Cow Fiesta!](#)

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[The Included Middle](#)

Facts and Phallacies

by Tim Maroney

It is generally agreed that Aleister Crowley's approach to sex magick, and in fact to his religious tradition as a whole, was "phallic." He described it in this way repeatedly and enthusiastically. This might lead us to wonder whether Crowley was sexist, and whether he considered the male sex organs superior to the female, and by extension, the male superior to the female in general.

There has been surprisingly little discussion of this important issue in O.T.O. publications. Recently the Outer Head of the Order, Hymenæus Beta, printed his Address to the Women's Conference¹ in the international newsletter. This Address touched on a broad range of issues related to Crowley's gender attitudes, but it raised more questions than it settled.

The Gender-Neutral Phallus

According to the Address, Crowley's phallicism does not exclude women, because

“phallus” is a gender-neutral term. We are told that Crowley was using a woman-inclusive meaning of “phallus” derived from psychology. “Crowley read his Freud and Jung very thoroughly. He didn’t use capital P Phallus without assuming that his readers knew what was meant. Unfortunately few today do. He was referring to the psychoanalytic stage of full genital organization, which is the third of a series. The first state is infantile, undifferentiated, and of course generally chaste. The second stage is narcissistic, usually corresponding to adolescence, and masturbatory. In the third, the phallic as they chose to call it, the individual psychology is so organized as to integrate the psyche with the genital consciousness and its associated instincts, and is then prepared to enter the world, to have intercourse.”

Freud’s psychosexual theory of development differs. The phallic stage in the Freudian model actually is one of the infantile stages, occurs before the age of five (rather than after adolescence), is specifically “phallic” in the sense of the male generative organ (rather than gender-neutral), and occurs years before the final stage of development, which is called “genital” (a gender-neutral term). In Freud’s model, first comes the oral stage, characterized by sucking, biting and swallowing. Second is the anal stage, characterized by toilet training. Third is the phallic stage, about the end of the third or fourth year, characterized by playful self-stimulation, and the formation of the Oedipal complex. During the phallic stage of development comes “penis envy.” In this infamous theory, Freud claimed that the natural course of development is stymied during the phallic stage in girls, and that they blame their mothers for their lack of a phallus. Then the fourth stage, from about five until adolescence, is called the latency period, and finally during adolescence the fifth, “genital” stage sets in, characterized by preparation for marriage.²

It is questionable that Crowley read Freud in depth. His scattered references to Freud touch repeatedly on a few broad themes in no great detail. Crowley refers to the primacy of the sex instinct, to the Oedipus complex, and to the unconscious as a source of dreams and phantasms, and little else.

As for Jung, most of his work was unavailable in English until late in Crowley’s life or after his death. Crowley did read the first English translation of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*³. This book deals extensively with phallic symbolism and the libido, and Crowley refers to it in his commentaries to *The Book of the Law*⁴. Judging by its solar-phallic content, this book may have been a significant influence on Crowley’s thought and his reformation of the O.T.O. However, the book condemns Freud’s theory, and refers to the “phallus” in its traditional male sense. Jung uses the gender-neutral term “libido” to indicate psychic energy⁵ in both men and women, but “phallus” to refer to the male organ and its symbols. A number of symbols of female genitalia are discussed, but none are called “phallic.”

If Crowley had a gender-neutral interpretation of “phallus,” he did not get it from Freud, whose use of the word was gender-specific. Nor could this usage derive from Jung, who was no adherent of Freud’s psychosexual theory, and who also used “phallus” in a gender-specific sense. Scholarly English⁶ and Greek⁷ dictionaries contain no

gender-neutral usage of “phallus” from ancient times to the present. It would be anomalous to ascribe this unique usage to Crowley, who from all indications used the word in its traditional sense. If there is any evidence to establish this peculiar reading, it was not presented in the Address.

An interesting view appears in a book found in the curriculum of Crowley’s occult order A.·A.·8, Richard Payne Knight’s *A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus* 9. Knight applies the now obsolete method of syncretistic comparativism to a variety of phallic and vulvar deities in an attempt to demonstrate that they all express the Neo-Platonic legend of an original hermaphroditic creator God who split into two halves, one male and one female. He alternates in apparent confusion between asserting that the genders of deities are interchangeable since they all symbolize the original creator, and that male deities represent the “active generative power of God” while female deities represent the “passive generative power of earth.” He is more consistent in holding that the differentiated “organs of generation” represent the gender-specific powers. Since he does not use the word “phallus,” Knight could not have been the source of the purported usage in Crowley.

There are, however, elements of Knight’s original hermaphroditism in Crowley, as in *Yoni Lingum* - by AshChapter 35 of *The Book of Lies*, “Venus of Milo,” which after condemning the female body as “ugly” states, “the Lingam and the Yoni are but diverse developments of One Organ”. In the comment to the chapter, though, Crowley is careful to refute any appearance of egalitarianism. Placing the female in a distinctly inferior position, he writes, “the female body becomes beautiful in so far as it approximates to the male. The female is to be regarded as having been separated from the male, in order to reproduce the male in a superior form”. His lukewarm, androcentric redaction of Knight’s original hermaphroditism does not suggest that the word “phallus” had a gender-neutral meaning to Crowley, or that either Crowley or Knight regarded the two sets of genitals as interchangeable or equivalent.

A gender-neutral phallicism is hard to see in Crowley’s work. There is no reference to any woman as in natural possession of a phallus, and he did not believe that women were equal partners with men in sex. In outer writings his explanation of sex magick revolves around the relationship between father and son, and in the human quintessence within the semen.¹⁰ Sometimes a mother and daughter are paired with the father and son; often the father and son stand alone; never are the mother and daughter discussed independently. In *The Star Sapphire* sex magick ritual¹¹, the woman appears only in a bracketed note, and is treated as a tool of the magician, not his partner. The same formula is discernible in the Gnostic Mass, on which more below. In *Liber Aleph* Crowley writes that pre-eminent in all sex magick “is the Formula of the Serpent with the Head of the Lion,” the semen, “and all this Magick is wrought by the Radiance and Creative Force thereof.”¹² To Crowley the magick is in the man. The woman is a necessary, respected and even consecrated tool of this formula but she is not the source of magick. She is only a magick mirror for the manifestation of the God.

The Matriarchal Æon of Gimbutas

The Address tells us that a matriarchal theory of history expressed by Marija Gimbutas has caught on in academic circles. In fact, though, the consensus view of Gimbutas in her academic field, archæology, rejects her conclusions about a peaceful prepatriarchal society in prehistory. Where the theory has caught on is in the popular mind, because of her popular books on the subject (and those of Riane Eisler¹³), but not in archæology, where it is controversial at best, and more often simply ignored. The model boasts a few scattered advocates in disciplines such as classics and gender studies, but it enjoys only tepid support in any academic field.

Gimbutas does not describe her theory as “matriarchal.” On the contrary, she posits an egalitarian matrilineal society, not a matriarchy. “The world of myth was not polarized into male and female... Both principles were manifest side by side. The male divinity in the shape of a young man or male animal appears to affirm and strengthen the forces of the creative and active female. Neither is subordinate to the other; by complementing one another, their power is doubled.”¹⁴ She refers to the culture of the period as “a balanced, nonpatriarchal and nonmatriarchal social system.”¹⁵ Matriarchy is a feature of Crowley’s Æon of Isis¹⁶ but not of Gimbutas’ “gylanic” prehistory.

The Address’s account of Gimbutas says that about 1000 to 500 BCE, “2,500 to 3,000 years ago — different from Crowley’s 2,000 to 2,500 years [i.e., 500 to 1 BCE], but close enough — she found that an influx of warlike and nomadic Indoeuropean tribes who characteristically worshipped a sky-god moved in and took over.” Actually, though, Gimbutas’s theory of Kurganization concerns events of 5,500 to 6,000 years ago, in the vicinity of 4000 to 3500 BCE, a difference of three millennia from Crowley’s dates.

Dates

Dating discrepancies between Marija Gimbutas, Aleister Crowley and the Women’s Conference Address

Crowley’s idea of the Æon of Isis was untenable even in the light of the ancient history available in his time. An Æon is supposed to last around two millennia, with flexibility in the start date of roughly 500 years. This puts Crowley’s Æon of Isis around 3000 to 2000 BCE for its start, and around 500 to 1 BCE for its end. In “Across the Gulf”¹⁷ he placed its end during the life of his previous prophetic incarnation, Ankh-f-n-Khonsu, in the 26th dynasty of Egypt. This period extends well into written history, and the records and remains of Middle Eastern and European cultures at the time indicate patriarchal political systems. It is hard to see how anyone could think the first 25 Egyptian dynasties were “matriarchal.” The latest possible date for the end of the hypothetical prepatriarchal period is around 3000 BCE, an Æon before Crowley’s date for the end of the Æon of Isis. In proposing that this period was a matriarchal age, Crowley demonstrated that, as he admitted elsewhere, history was never his subject: “he showed intense repugnance to history.”¹⁸ He knew the classical authors and myths, but not the history of the ancient world.

The Address is an example of normal occult history, true to the tradition of Levi, Blavatsky, Crowley, and generations of “Templar” Freemasons. Rather than examining speculative models of history skeptically, it uses mistaken accounts of mainstream sources to bolster those speculations.

Passive But Equal

One of the most contentious issues in current Thelemic discussion is the subject of gender roles in the Gnostic Mass, the central ritual of the O.T.O. Among the questions that are often asked are these. Why do most of the lines, and most of the action, fall to the Priest, with the Priestess relegated to a role that seems secondary? Why is the Lance so much more prominent than the Cup? Why can official O.T.O. Masses feature only men as Priests and only women as Priestesses? Why are all the saints men?

The Address was insulting toward those who believe that Crowley wrote his sexism into the Mass. “I’ve heard the Mass criticized as sexist, and frankly think that stupid. Who, when the Mass was first introduced into North America during World War I, was worshipping the goddess? Especially in the context of religious ceremony of Western origin? Who understood the divinity of the feminine at all?”

The alternative spirituality movement out of which Thelema arose was replete with female deities, and with female leaders acting as mediators to the divine. The Golden Dawn often named its temples after goddesses, and had so many female members that A. E. Waite and other conservative men felt threatened and tried to limit the leadership to Masons. Spiritualism and Theosophy were led by women. P. B. Randolph and the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor treated women as equal partners with men in sex and sex magic, unlike the male-centered O.T.O. Thomas Lake Harris’ sexual mysticism had a great deal to do with his contact with enlightened female spirits. More than a century earlier, Richard Payne Knight had dealt enthusiastically with the erotic rites of various goddesses in his influential book. Crowley himself said that there existed at the time female-led communities of witches (although he criticized them for refusing to have sex with men, or as he preferred to say, “denying to the Holy Spirit the right to indwell His Temple”).¹⁹ Even in the mainstream, Catholicism’s cult of Mary was in full force. The answer to the question is: Within occultism, nearly everyone was working with the divinity of the feminine in Western ceremonies, except Masons — and even there, at the progressive edge of esoteric Masonry and Co-Masonry. To represent the Gnostic Mass as an advance in gender relations, merely for presenting a sacred female, would be unhistorical.

Untitled - by Kiri Namtvedt
The presence of a female figure who is treated with deference does not mean that a religious tradition is not sexist. The example of Mary demonstrates this; her prominence hardly makes Catholicism a haven for women’s rights. If a ritual indicates that a female character should naturally be subjugated to a man or reduced to stereotypical “feminine” attributes, then her treatment is sexist no matter how high she is placed atop the pedestal (or sat upon the altar).

The practice of staving off an accusation of sexism or racism by pointing to the presence of a member of the oppressed group is known as “tokenism.” Is the Priestess being tokenized? We will need to look at her role. Is she presented as naturally subjugated to the Priest? Is she viewed through a veil of stereotype? In the opening the two partners seem roughly equivalent. The Priestess dedicates more time and effort to raising the Priest to his role than he does to raise her to hers, but she really opens the ritual. The ceremony of the Introit belongs to the Priestess, even though it mostly goes to her raising of the Priest. In the central formula, though, the Priest is paramount, performing the critical points VI through VIII nearly solo while the silent, naked Priestess acts only to present this or that tool for his favor, authorize him to reveal her nakedness, and utter with him the word of orgasm once he is ready to shed his sacred blood. As written this seems to be a formula of phallocentricity. The male is the center of the sexual act and woman his functionary, as in other Crowley writings on sex magick.

The Address acknowledges that in the Mass the male “has the largely active role” and the female is passive. In the future there will be an alternative ritual “in which the female takes the more active role and the male the more passive.” This seems to be a curious approach to sex. Ordinarily one partner is not active and the other passive.²⁰ Both are active; an unresponsive partner is disliked by all genders and persuasions. It is hard to understand why the O.T.O. would seek to enshrine this odd formula of activity and passivity in its rituals, except in the context of Crowley’s Victorian-era view of sex as a male activity done to women.

If the ritual requires one active officer and one passive officer, rather than an active male and a passive female officer, what need is there for a new ritual? Why not just perform a Mass by the script, with women free to assume the role of the active partner and men free to assume the passive? It is current O.T.O. policy that the Priest must be played by a man and the Priestess by a woman. Does the leadership of the Order assert as policy that there are natural and proper roles for men and women?

Holding out hope of a future, “perhaps not soon,” in which these questionable roles are reversed in a new ritual “produced by a woman” where there is still a particular part for the woman and a particular part for the man, does not address concerns about the status of Thelemic women here and now, or about gender stereotyping, or about heterocentrism.

The Gnostic Mass raises another issue, which is the list of saints, all of whom are men. The Address explains that “the Saints are paternal, but this is intentional. It is a list of the small handful of men and man-gods who, in the opinion of the author of the Mass, understood the divinity of woman.” No citation of the author, Crowley, to this effect was provided. The short biographies of the saints presented by the O.T.O.²¹ rarely even touch on this theme, and it’s hard to see how they could, short of contrivance. What do Hermes, Moses, Priapus, Merlin, François Rabelais, Elias Ashmole, Friedrich Nietzsche, or most of the other Gnostic saints have to do with “understanding the divinity of woman?”

The script of the Mass introduces the saints in a way that makes the intent of the author clear. They were not chosen for their respect for female divinity — they were chosen as the champions of the phallus. Addressing the “Lord of Life and Joy, that art the might of man” — that is, the phallus — Crowley describes the saints as the servants of this Lord, those “that did of old adore thee and manifest thy glory unto men”. Women and goddesses are not mentioned, and need not apply. From his description, we could reasonably infer that Crowley wrote an all-male saints list because he believed that the guardians of phallic magick through history had been men.

We are told that “the Order is actively researching female saints; they do not however belong in ‘Liber XV’,” that is, the Gnostic Mass, the central ritual of the O.T.O. No reason is given, and it does not seem that this addition would deface the Mass. Without disrupting the ritual structure, the “Saints” passage of the Collects could be directed to both Lord and Lady, and male and female saints listed together.

Woman’s Sexual Intuition

One of the best-known issues in feminism concerns gender role stereotypes. The traditional social gender ideal holds that there are natural roles for men and women to play in society; and specifically, that men are suited to political, economic, intellectual, and labor roles, while women are relegated to roles such as mother, sex object, domestic, and vessel of a kind of instinctive natural goodness, as opposed to masculine virtue. Much of feminism has revolved around freeing women, and more recently men, from the artificial restrictions on their wills imposed by these roles, and informed people today are suspicious of casual assertions about the natural role of either gender. There may in fact be inherent psychological differences but the subject requires caution.

The Address repeatedly postulates gender roles harmonious with traditional stereotypes. For example, it refers to “women and the particular powers and aptitudes that you possess.” It implies that men cannot understand women, saying of these female powers and aptitudes that “these were questions that Crowley, as a man, could not introspect.”²² With respect to the whore-goddess Babalon, “women have a particular, natural and intuitive understanding of her nature,” and women have “always had a more direct and immediate understanding of sexual mysteries than men.” The Address postulates separate male and female domains of understanding, and the female domain is intuitive and sexual. If some women are unhappy being limited to a feminine mode of knowing, their concerns are not addressed.

The Address says that male and female sexual response are “radically different.... We [men] usually think of sex as something we do ‘out there’ in the macrocosm, whereas for women it is something that literally occurs inside of you, inside your ego-boundaries, within your microcosm, coming in from without.” This statement ascribes feelings to men in general, but as a man, I do not find this to be an accurate description of my perspective. I think of sex as something I do with someone, in which we are both equally immersed, and which is just as much a challenge to my ego-boundaries as my partner’s. I do not think of it as “something I do ‘out there’,” as if I were acting on a

passive, receiving object.

PuellaWhat is it for a woman that is “coming in from without”? There seems to be a familiar confusion between sex and a phallus here. A penis may enter a vagina, but sex does not enter a woman from a man. Sex is already in both partners equally, and each brings what they have to the other.

It is curious that the Address presents heterosexual roles and phallic-vaginal sex as psychologically paradigmatic. How does this analysis apply to men, gay or straight, who are accustomed to sex that “literally occurs inside” their bodies? How does it apply to women who make love in ways that do not involve penetration (or envelopment)? Even if we were to accept the idea that sex involving a penis and a vagina makes one partner passive and the other active, what makes this particular form of sex a prototype for the perspectives of all members of each gender and persuasion?

Concerning the roles proper to the different genders, we are told that “the women of Thelema have much to transmit themselves concerning the two traditionally passive weapons [cup and disk], that they are connected to a source. I don’t think that this will come through the media appropriate to the other weapons, such as writing and talking. I think it will come through inculcating a culture of love and understanding and responsible action....” An example explains how women will make this contribution: “I have learned most of what I know of magick... from women I have loved. My first great initiatrix did not consciously try to teach anything, and was in fact entirely unconscious of what she had to transmit. She just knew what to do — I say ‘knew’ in that special feminine sense of that attribute of Binah called Intelligence — not the mimicry and language of the Ruach.”

(The Address uses technical language drawn from the Qabalah. Binah is the third sphere of the Tree of Life, symbolized by the Great Mother or Primordial Sea, which is represented in the human psyche by intuition. Its “Intelligence” is not what we normally think of as “intelligent”; that is, it is neither rational nor verbal. Normal intelligence resides in the Ruach, a lower part of the psyche. Above the feminine intuition of Binah is the masculine will of Chokmah.)

This statement reflects a traditional stereotype of women: they have little to contribute with their “writing and talking,” but much to give of their intuition and their wombs. It is difficult to estimate the chilling effect this statement might have on female members who wish to participate with their intellects rather than their genitalia.

Conclusion

The emergence of gender issues into public discourse within the O.T.O. is a sign of progress. While much discussion has gone on behind closed doors or in the spoken word, until the Address was published there was no serious discussion of these issues in the public record. Gender issues are community issues and it is only in public deliberation that change occurs in the community.

Gender studies are intellectually challenging. In any society, gender roles are pillars of the underlying and largely unconscious matrix of assumptions about social righteousness, which the ancient Egyptians called Ma'at. These roles are so deeply ingrained from infancy on that they are often difficult or impossible to understand from within. For this reason, the field demands careful and critical attention. Researchers in the field need to be familiar with established methodologies and paradigms, whether they accept them or not, and they need to pay careful attention to the methodological and historical errors of the past. With proper caution, the field can be very rewarding.

In the popular imagination, the sexist (like the racist) is a mythical beast, easily recognized but now rarely seen. Leaving the popular mind and taking a few steps down the feminist path, the beast appears everywhere, and self-righteousness becomes one's bosom companion. The budding feminist is secure in the knowledge of personal superiority to the sexist rabble. Just a few steps farther, though, the student comes across a mirror set in the path. The cherished critique wraps around, and we realize that the beast is just as much a part of ourselves as it is part of any other. We are all raised sexist and we all bear assumptions that we may never be able to fully transcend. The path is longer than any of our lives.

Because of this I feel no hesitation in saying that Aleister Crowley was a sexist, any more than I would hesitate to say that I am a sexist, or any other person. The questions in each case revolve around how sexism manifests in the particular case and what can be done to improve the situation. For me, I do less than I could but more than I might. Crowley is dead and I will leave it to spiritualists to help him. I am more concerned with the here and now. Crowley has left us with a legacy colored by his sexism. We can only improve the situation by facing up to these problems and trying to solve them, not by waving them aside.

Dove

Thanks to reviewers Renée Rosen, Donald H. Frew, and others. All errors are the responsibility of the author.

END NOTES

1 The Magical Link, Fall 1997 e.v., pp. 8-10.

2 Sigmund Freud, "Infantile Sexuality", Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud (Modern Library).

3 Transformations and Symbols of the Libido, later shortened to Symbols of Transformation. An English translation was published in 1916 under the title Psychology of the Unconscious.

4 The Law is for All (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon, 1996), p. 147.

5 Symbols of Transformation (Princeton: Bollingen, 1967), p. 135. Jung differs with Freud on the interpretation of "libido," extending it to "psychic energy" which is not necessarily sexual, although it may be.

6 Oxford English Dictionary, second edition, entries "phallic" and "phallus."

7 Liddell-Scott Greek Lexicon, entry "phallos".

- 8 Magick (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc, 1994), p. 453.
- 9 Published in 1786. (It is rumored that the publishers were the Friars of Medmenham.)
- 10 The Book of Lies (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1978), p. 46, "Dewdrops."
- 11 Ibid., pp. 82-3.
- 12 Liber Aleph: The Book of Wisdom or Folly (Level Press, 1972?), p. 91, "De Formula Lunæ."
- 13 The Chalice and the Blade (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), and others.
- 14 The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe, 7000-3500 B.C. (University of California Press, 1982), p. 237.
- 15 The Language of the Goddess (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991) p. xx. Emphasis added.
- 16 Magick (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1994), p. 164.
- 17 The Equinox, vol. I, no. VII (March 1912), pp. 293-354.
- 18 The Equinox of the Gods (O.T.O., 1936), p. 44. Crowley is writing of himself in the third person, or J. F. C. Fuller is writing authorized biography.
- 19 Magick, op. cit., pp. 158-9.
- 20 The complex issue of willed power exchange is beside the point, as it would be difficult to interpret the Mass as an SM ritual.
- 21 Tau Apiryon (Sabazius X°) and Soror Helena, Red Flame #2: Mystery of Mystery (Berkeley: O.T.O., 1995), pp. 119ff.
- 22 Crowley would have differed on this point, asserting that his natural "hermaphroditism" empowered him to understand women from within, as in his Confessions (London: Arkana Books, 1979, p. 45): "The principal effect [of hermaphroditism] has been to enable him to understand the psychology of women, to look at any theory with comprehensive and impartial eyes, and to endow him with maternal instincts on spiritual planes. He has thus been able to beat the women he has met at their own game and emerge from the battle of sex triumphant and scatheless."

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From the Camel's Back

By Baphometis Continuity, Lodge Master

Penis, penis, penis, penis, cocksucker. Oops. Even my spellchecker doesn't recognize cocksucker - I guess it's not in Microsoft Word's internal dictionary. It should be in there, because cocksucking is here to stay. It's a whole lot of fun and when done right, gives great pleasure to all parties involved. I love to suck cock. And so do many of the adults I know - and some of the ones who aren't so sure if they want to give mouth massage to

another's diamond rod are happy to be on the receiving end. If they're not a cock-sucker, then perhaps they're a yoni nibbler. Or a vulva licker. Or maybe just an expert kisser.

Wait. Come to think of it, I do know an adult who doesn't: my best friend from high school doesn't suck cock. She decided when she was about 15 that there was something very nasty and unsavory about giving oral pleasure. Something about urine and semen coming from the same tube. Something her mother said a nice girl doesn't do. But I know her to be a happy recipient of the previously mentioned yoni nibbling. She likes to cum that way, no doubt. Fear of oral sex isn't unusual among the uninitiated, I suppose, but it always surprises me when I meet an adult who claims not to partake out of principle. Some people don't like oral sex because their clit or their penis is so sensitive that it sets them off in a bad way. Susie Bright once noted in an essay that she prefers a spanking over a licking. For some it is a matter of aesthetics. Madonna is reputed to eschew the blow-job. But they probably found out by experimentation and not through avoidance of the entire subject.

Similarly, it surprises me when I meet (or observe through the media, as is mostly the case) adults who are squeamish about the word penis. In Victorian times, it was considered unseemly to refer to or display a human leg. Piano legs were adorned with special covers so that no one's delicate sensibilities would be outraged. We do not live in Victorian times, but there seems to be a bit of a holdover. Case in point: there's a radio quiz show which originates in Minnesota called "What Do You Know?" Or maybe it's "Whattaya Know?" The last time I tuned in, one of the questions concerned the "animal part most often smuggled out of Canada and used as an aphrodisiac." The possible answers included reindeer horns, seal penises, and something else. The host read the question and the multiple-choice answers with a curious combination of brashness and apology. No one wanted to repeat the p-word. Jokes were made; nervous giggles. The audience howled. The contestant guessed "reindeer horns". The correct answer was "seal penises". There was no way in hell anybody was going to get it right because no one there wanted to say it. Fully grown humans were guffawing and acting like it was a very big, naughty deal to say the word penis on the radio right out in front of God and everybody on a sunny mid-western afternoon. What I suspect is that they say it at home, among themselves, but they think that all the other people believe they aren't supposed to say it or hear it without out-rage/surprise/embarrassment, so they act out, regardless of their true feelings. If they are actually astounded, embarrassed, etc, then they are pathetic humans and less deserving of a body than some souls swimming around out there in the aethyr waiting to get snared. You get one body. It's got a bunch of cool parts. Know them by name!

It cannot have escaped your notice that the US President has been getting a lot of media attention concerning his supposed extracurricular sexual activities in the Oval Office. Now, to begin with, who President Clinton fucks is none of my business, unless I happen to know them and they tell me about it. The fact that he fucks and sucks does not come as a big sur-prise; in fact, it would be quite disheartening to think that he didn't have sex. Since he is a married President, and much of the American population seems

to think (or act like they think, at least if they think anyone's watching) monogamy is laudable, it is equally unsurprising that he would be concerned with discretion.

Were I in his political and personal position, and about to commence an affair with someone, I'm quite sure an important part of the preliminary negotiation would concern the (obvious) need for secrecy. You know: "We can't fall in love. We can't tell anyone. We have to keep this quiet." How about you? Would you want the world to know - given the situation and all the parameters? Okay, I thought not. So, we're going to rake this man over the coals for behaving in a way that is (at least secretly) understandable to most of the population? Why yes! And that's because there is a vast gulf between the template of natural human behavior and the template that some people, by inference, accept as 'socially correct'. This then is coupled with the great fear that if they let go of the template, even for a moment, the fabric of society will crumble and they will be left standing holding the threads.

The backlash concerning the media coverage of this non-event has been an astounding side note. When Terry Gross was interviewing journalists on her syndicated NPR show, Fresh Air, topic A was how they, the journalists, were handling "the difficulties and embarrassments of having to discuss oral sex in the media." It was the damndest thing I've ever heard. It was a visit to the Twilight Zone, both for me, and I think, for the journalists interviewed. Once Terry asked, they seemed to feel the need to play along; "Oh yes, harrumph, it seems so formal." Ah, at last, a breath of real fresh air.

The front page of the Austin American Statesman featured an article about the anger and frustration parents were feeling now that they could "no longer allow their children to read the paper or hear the news." While some parents claimed this was because the President was being shown to be a liar and this was deeply upsetting to the kiddies, most came clean and said it was because they had no clue about how to explain "oral sex" to their children.

And what I want to know is: why is this a mystery? What is the problem with saying, "it's a way adults give each other pleasure" and moving along?

I don't think we should be admitting to oral sex; I think we should be proclaiming it. And until we do, we are implicitly allowing this madness to go on. If you don't live your values, then you have to stand by and watch while that which you truly love gets trashed. And you can do nothing, without standing up for what you believe in.

Accordingly, I hereby proclaim July 1, 1998, as Oral Pleasure Day! It is, not coincidentally, my birthday. Come on out and celebrate Oral Pleasure Day with me; and remember, we don't call it oral sex around here either.

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Rose Cross
Manifestation Template

By Frater Xephyr
Rose Cross

There are many methods by which anyone can get anything they want. Thelemites are, of course, familiar with Crowley's definition of magick as the method by which reality is changed in accord with one's will. The art and practice of magick frequently involves a long-term process of self-development and understanding and can be seen as a primary tool of personal growth. The methods and philosophies of magick are well documented these days, and there really is no substitute for a wide base of occult understanding.

Those with little or no personal experience with magick frequently suffer from the is perception that white magick is stuff that relates only to the Great Work™ and black magick is stuff that relates to getting what you really want. Consequently, the idea of using magick for personal gain has received a lot of bad press. The following activity will not be called "magick" for this reason. Any resemblance of the following to an act of magick is hereby deemed "coincidental".

This is the simple four-step process to get anything desired:

Decide what you want
Define what your goal is and what it is not
Plan to get what you want
Do your plan

Before it is experienced, the following method may seem too simple. Obviously, a full description of the process is slightly more complicated, or this article would be over. As a framework upon which to weave one's own dreams, this method is simple enough to cover most needs, yet complete enough to be fully self-contained. Here follows a full description of the process.

Decide what you want

This may seem like an obvious step, but so often, it is forgotten. Without a firm idea of what is truly wanted - without a goal - no amount of trying will get one any closer to get anything or anywhere. It is important at this stage to recognize that the desire for change is ultimately rooted in some personal behavior or necessity. One may want to change others, but only the self can be changed. This desire should thus be expressed in terms of a personal change or experience.

Should you find that a sentence or two has been written about your object of desire, another, brief, description should be written. The shortest description of the desired goal is called the "target phrase".

Define what you goal is and what it is not

It's all good and well to decide to want something, but without a firm idea about what that thing is and what it isn't, there is little chance that what you get will be anything like

what you imagined. This is a good opportunity to practice constructive list-building. Take two sheets of paper and write the target phrase at the top of both pages. On the first page, end the target phrase with "IS", on the other, end the phrase with "IS NOT".

Begin by writing a simple sentences describing the object of desire. If a description uses negation, put that sentence on the "IS NOT" page, otherwise, put it on the "IS" page. Brainstorm for more sentences, even if they seem obvious. Make sure what you write is true, not only for the object desired, but also for yourself. Anything that prevents you from getting what you want should also be put on the "IS NOT" page.

After the desire has been fully described, examine your two lists. For each item on the "IS NOT" page, there should be a corresponding item on the "IS" page which can replace it. Create such sentences as necessary. Once all of your "IS NOT"s have been negated by corresponding "IS"s, throw the "IS NOT" page away. Burn it, if you think doing so might make you feel better.

Plan to get what you want

Go down the "IS" list, called the "description list," and look for anything you already have and mark it with a dash. Anything that seems like it would be easy to get right now, mark with a star. Things which appear to require some effort, but which are not impossible, mark with a cross. Remaining items should be marked with a bang (exclamation point), and represent things which seem very difficult, if not impossible, to get.

The plan is created from the marked description list. Start with a fresh sheet of paper and write "PLAN" on the top. Write the word "GIVEN" on the next line, followed by all of the items marked with a dash on the description list. Skip a line and write "To Do". For each item in your description list marked with a star, write that item in your PLAN, followed by a few sentences describing how that particular point can be had. Continue the process with the items marked with a cross, but expect to write a paragraph or two about each one. If, during the process of writing out this part of the plan, an item appears to be far more difficult than expected, change its star or cross to a bang on the description list and cross it out of the plan for now.

At this point, you should have a description list describing the object of desire, and a plan which describes most, if not all, of the things you need to do to get what you want. Anything in your description list marked impossible (with a bang) should become the object of serious meditation. Ask yourself if this item is really part of what you want. Ask yourself why it is impossible and try to find a way for it to become possible. Ultimately, each such item can be broken down like your main object of your desire as a separate process.

Do your plan

Up until now, this method has required little or no effort from the participant other than a

good amount of thinking and writing. Unless this last step is taken, all the above preparation will be for naught. This is where you go down your PLAN and do those things that you know will bring you closer to where you want to be. You do not need to wait until your plan is complete to begin doing it. It's easier to do the simple things first, anyway, and that rapid reinforcement of simple goals met gives one motivation to complete the full task, making even the more difficult tasks seem easier as one goes along. Actually working on the plan is incentive to finish writing it, as well.

Once you've begun writing your plan, try to read it out loud each morning. As you accomplish each item on the list, cross it out on the plan. Try to keep a record of what you do to accomplish each task, how it went, and what its results were. Periodically review your progress and decide if you need to change some aspect of your approach.

As time wears on, the action items in your plan may change. Desired items can fall away and be replaced by other items, so if the description list changes, it should follow that the PLAN would change appropriately. Should your plan take a long time to complete, you can expect it to change frequently. Like life.

If you find yourself midway through your plan without any motivation to complete it, go through the whole process again from where you are. Sometimes it helps to take stock of your current position, to reaffirm that this is what you want or to give yourself the chance to decide that it's not really what you want. It's okay to do this. It is better to quit when you realize you should than to spend time and energy proceeding towards something you don't really want.

Proof

There's no final exam on this method, no place to go prove that you have made it all the way through. Its only proof is in its implementation. When you get to the end of your plan, you either have what you wanted or you have decided that it wasn't something you wanted. Either way, the desire for something will be satiated. Any energy spent this way will be used constructively, encouraging self-understanding. And the more you understand about yourself now, the easier it will be to make yourself happy later.

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Jewels from the Naked Brilliance

The Science & Spirit of Astrology

by Soror Nephthys

The global dichotomy of science and spirit has long interested me. All the wars waged across the Earth, large and small, cold and hot, can be broken down to a fundamental division between what recent times have revealed to be Humankind's two faces. I also

believe that these wars, whether they occur on battlefields or in political halls, will never stop until Humankind as a whole recognizes that science and spirit must and do coexist: it is ignorance of this Universal Law that generates upheaval. Through my own personal experiences and through the use of Astrology, as well as other systems, I have gained what I believe to be unique insight into this gap between science and spirit. I now truly believe it to be one of the most useful tools at the present for merging Humanity's concrete scientific side with its abstract spiritual side.

Not being a person to take any sort of complex system lightly, I have delved deeply into Astrology. Most of my background henceforth has been in the hard sciences, largely biology and chemistry, thusly generating a hardened skeptic: if I couldn't sense it and test it, it wasn't worthy of my attention. As I studied these disciplines, I began to notice that they blended together in places. Biology became chemistry at the microscopic level, and vice versa. Chemistry became physics at the atomic level. So on and so forth. I also noticed that despite this blending, there was always a hole in the explanation of various things once a certain level of detail was reached. Scientists put on their serious faces and term those things that have yet to be solved "conundrums" and pursue answers with the relentless fervor of religious fanatics. Their revelations have brought monumental change to the way we live our lives, yet there remain unanswered questions.

We answer these questions by practicing whatever religion or spiritual path we happen to feel comfortable with and tapping into the current of energy that connects all living things in the Universe. Christians call it God. Muslims call it Allah. Thelemites call it Will. It cannot be measured by instruments. It can only be sensed by a living thing. While science is required to explain the things we cannot physically sense, spirituality is required to explain the things we can only feel inside. Astrology is both scientific and spiritual in its principal, which makes it fairly unique amongst most disciplines.

Several centuries ago, astronomy and Astrology were one and the same, and were respected and used by royalty and peon alike. Briefly, science and spirit were one in the Renaissance Age. Science as we know it was born out of spirit, out of things now deemed superstitious, or even Satanic. A great deal of our basic chemical knowledge comes from ancient alchemists who depended upon their fellow astrologers and studied it themselves. Almost as quickly as it was born, science severed its ties with its spiritual parents. Astrology retains its scientific elements, though. Proper calculation of charts requires knowledge of higher math functions as well as an understanding of astrophysical motion. Astrology still relies on the base measurements of astronomy to create ephemeris. Yet all the science aside, Astrology still requires basic human intuition and insight, the same kind of insight the psychologist uses to help patients overcome difficulties. There are places in Astrology where measurement stops and intuition begins. Used properly and in depth, Astrology can be a tool to show us how we interact with ourselves, as well as with other people and other situations. It is a tool for understanding strengths and weaknesses, and a map by which we can navigate our lives to our best advantage and happiness. It is one of the greatest keys to finding one's True Will. It shows us where we need to work to better ourselves, and more importantly,

Astrology shows us how to fix those problems which keep us from our Will. More often than not, misunderstanding one's self leads to neglect of one or many parts of the life which may need attention, but are neglected because of the general set of 'should-do' rules most of us have. Confusion occurs when life does not yield happiness when lived out according to 'plan'. This confusion can be abated by using Astrology to show where neglect and imbalance is occurring, and how to rework one's life so that equilibrium is achieved. Through equilibrium comes happiness and fulfillment of the Great Work.

Astrology gives us our own personal user's guide, custom written for the individual person by time, planets, and the stars. We really do come with instructions! This guide contains much, much more than the Sun. While it represents our most expressive self, it is only one of many bodies that interact in the dance that makes each of us our personal selves. Focusing on the Sun cannot do what a complete birth chart can do: create a psychological map of a human being that shows how each part of a person interacts with all the others. Recognizing the sources of separate life identities and needs gives one the power to integrate them into a working whole. However, without the birth chart or many years of psychoanalysis, it is virtually impossible to do this easily. It's like trying to put a puzzle together in the dark when you don't know what it's supposed to look like. Astrology shows someone not only the nature of these different parts of the self, but how they interact with one another in positive and negative ways. It shows you what the puzzle is supposed to look like so you can begin constructing it in the light.

Why Astrology works may be something that always baffles us. It is not my belief that we are somehow 'influenced' directly by the stars or planets, either by gravity, light, or otherwise. My own personal philosophy is that the Universe moves in cycles moving at different rates, thusly changing their relationships with each other. Yet each cycle is born out of the previous: as above, so below. Macrocosm, microcosm. The signs represent the older, most solid and slow cycles that govern the Universe on a fundamental level: it takes over 25,000 years for our entire Solar System to pass through the signs. The planets represent the newer, faster cycles that are more relative to our own immediate environment's evolution, immediate being that of the Solar System. The houses represent the quick cycles of daily life ('quick' relative to the slowest ones), the parts of one's life that can be readily defined relative to other's lives as well. The aspects represent our inner psychological cycles, the behaviors that make us who we are. The patterns in each set of cycles set the guide rules for that cycle, or the best way that cycle can be manifested. Placing all these different cycles together in one place lets one understand how there is so much variance amongst Humankind, and also how there is similarity. It links us by acknowledging that we are all part of one great scheme, and it separates us by telling us the intricacies of that scheme. Together, they represent the best way for each of us to manifest ourselves in our Universe, to manifest our Wills. Breaching the gap between science and spirit through the use of Astrology and other tools is necessary not just for the individual, but for all Humanity.

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The Natural Dreamer
by Soror Oalimn
Artwork by Martijn Benders

I would like to take the time to thank those of you who have sent in your letters. This will be the last installment of The Natural Dreamer for now. I may continue it some time in the future...

Letters to The Natural Dreamer
Dear Natural Dreamer,

I have been working on my dream techniques for some time now. I find that I have learned some new things but I am very frustrated when it comes to being disciplined about writing everything down. I have three kids and a full-time job so there never seems to be enough time. Can you make any suggestions for a quick method of learning lucid dreaming?

Time seems to always be an issue when you're working on a special project for yourself. I can suggest a couple of techniques for you to practice; perhaps they will work for you. Try these exercises when you are eating lunch by yourself, sitting on the toilet, taking a shower or while engaged in any activity that does not require a lot of your attention.

Start by getting focused. Relax your body, slow your breathing and concentrate on a daydream. You can daydream about anything! Sex, vacation, food, romance; find a subject that is good for you. Start by visualizing yourself as playing a role in the daydream. It is no good if you are an observer looking in. You need to be involved in the action. Start to control your actions; do what you want to do and make the daydream go your way. One might think of this as fantasizing as well. Practice this technique whenever you can and build your dream skills. Practice flying, breathing under water, self-defense techniques, or whatever supernatural power you want to achieve by working at them in your day dreams.

If you build your skills, this newly acquired ability may transfer to when you are dreaming while sleeping. The most important matter is realizing that you are dreaming. You can mentally get ready by telling yourself out loud that you will have lucid dreams. If that does not work, write it down on a piece of paper a few times and put the paper in a special place. Ask your Angels or Gods to help you, or maybe a deceased ancestor could lend a hand....

Sit down and think about how you will reach your mental being, then: give it a try. I know many people who have used these techniques with success. Remember: it takes 21 days to start a new habit.

Dear Natural Dreamer,

I am quite a natural dreamer like yourself. I have been working on my pre-cognitive dreams for some time now. I have to admit that these types of dreams are not transmitted clearly and tend to make little if any sense. Do you have any suggestions

that I might try to better these dream skills?

I have been working on my own pre-cognitive dreams for years. It can be frustrating but hang in there and you will start to see results. One technique that I use is lucid dreaming.

I now have a good strong hold on lucid dreaming and this helps me with my pre-cognitive dreaming. Most of my precognitive dreaming is in a form of a natural disaster.

For example, I have dreamt about a tornado. (I am not usually in these dreams, but am observing from above or wherever.) In my dream, I can remember screaming at people to find out where we were. In the past, the only information I could get out of the people was garbled and was not spoken in English. So I thought, 'maybe they are speaking to me in Enochian.' But I finally beat the language barrier by using my lucid dreaming technique. Once I know I am dreaming, then I can ask a direct question and get an answer. It was a little scary at first because I didn't expect them to talk back to me. So I am still learning to deal with it. But now, if I have a dream about a tornado I ask the people 'what city are we in?' Then, I can check out weather conditions in other cities to see if they had a tornado, or keep a record to see if the dream comes true in the future.

Unfortunately I don't have this mastered yet, but I can tell you from my own experience that the time frame between dream and incident has shortened itself as I continue this experiment. Sometimes a natural disaster would hit six months to a year down the road from the dream, so my timing was way off. In my dreams, I am now asking for more information besides the place, and I am now in the three to six month range. So hopefully as I continue these exercises I will be getting better and better at pre-cognitive dreaming. It is a skill that must be developed over time.

I am sharing real experiences with you in the hopes that it will help you figure out your next step into the wonderful world of dreams. Any great mystery is worth solving if you have the patience and endurance to do it. What may seem weird to others may be quite natural for you. I never let that get in my way. Keeping an open mind is important when it comes to different techniques with dreaming. If I had to stand on my head for two minutes every night just so that I could have a lucid dream you bet I would be doing it!

Sweet Dreams for now,

Soror Oalimn

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by Dionysos Thriambos

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Religious Thelema, or New Aeon Gnosticism, is a radically individualistic system of observance. Thus it enjoys nearly as many characterizations as it does adherents. Even

the institution of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, a subset of that system, embraces vast divergences. While I don't identify with the label "pagan," I know that many of my brothers and sisters in the Church do. This fact testifies to both the rich variety of perspective in the Church, and the complexity and multivalency of the word "pagan." This essay, occasioned by the imminence of the Council of Magickal Arts Beltane Festival, is a brief meditation on the varied denotations and connotations of "pagan," and how they apply to my personal observance of Thelema, and to that of OTO-EGC.

Pagan: "especially : a follower of a polytheistic religion (as in ancient Rome)"
(a Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition)

Thelema might be considered polytheistic. But it might also be considered a relativized form of monotheism, through the doctrine of the Holy Guardian Angel. It can also be considered atheistic, based on certain fairly direct readings of The Book of the Law. The jury is out-and I, for one, hope it stays there.

Pagan: "an adherent of a non-Christian religion"

Here's the one definition of pagan with which I can comfortably identify; i.e. any definition that would include not only Thelema, but also Islam. There are various other shades of "non-Christian" which don't necessarily accommodate Thelema. For example, Buddhism is more thoroughly non-Christian, because Thelema actively makes use of the symbolic detritus of Christianity, and thus enters into the "Judeo-Christian" continuum of religious conception.

Pagan: "an adherent of a pre-Christian religion"

This definition largely overlaps the first, and for our purposes we can extend it to cover "neo-paganism," where an attempt is made to recreate such religions without the advantage of a surviving tradition of practice. Thelema doesn't fit here because it is actually post-Christian, as just noted. The highly syncretic nature of Thelema enables it to "reactivate" pre-Christian materials that have been assimilated by Christianity, as well as to mesh with entirely non-Christian concepts and practices.

Pagan: "a follower of a rustic or provincial religion"

This definition starts to delve into the etymology of the term, from Late Latin *paganus*, from Latin, country dweller, from *pagus* country district. During the spread of Christianity, "pagan" became a term of derision for the indigenous religions, as opposed to the metropolitan sophistication of Christianity. In a more modern (or po-mo) context, Christianity itself fits this sense of "pagan" far better than Thelema or most neo-paganisms do.

Pagan: "one whose worship is performed in the wilderness"

This definition is related to the previous one, as well as to the kindred term "heathen." It is particularly apt of certain neo-Pagan systems where this feature is emphasized. There are certainly grounds for Thelemic Paganism of this type, e.g. Liber Legis I:61. We also have evidence of the exercise of such Thelemic Paganism in various camping festivals. But OTO-EGC, along with the bulk of Hermetic/Rosicrucian-style Thelema, is oriented around a distinctly temple-based ritual technology.

Pagan: "a follower of deistic or 'natural' religion, as opposed to 'revealed religion'" This idea of paganism holds that pagans rely on the Book of Nature for their religious conceptions, rather than the Bible, Koran, Stanzas of Dzyan, or some other "revealed" text transmitted through human authorship. Thelema obviously fails this test, though not so thoroughly as might at first be thought. Thelema makes of itself a sounder revealed religion than most, because of the documentation of the reception of the Law and the existence of the original manuscript. But it is also close to natural religion in its social and moral application, owing both to its central philosophies, and to the practical consequences of the Class A Short Comment to Liber Legis.

My final observation concerns the social origins of contemporary neo-paganism. These can be traced to

Wicca, of which Gerald Gardner established the germinal form, clearly informed by his initiation in the Thelemic OTO. (For an entertaining summary, see T Allen Greenfield's paper "The Secret History of Modern Witchcraft"-currently on the World Wide Web. Various spiritual elements of the late 20th Century counterculture of "sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll," as mapped out in Crowley's paper "Energized Enthusiasm." (Equinox I:9, p. 17 ff.)

Religious consequences of American feminism in the countercultural context.
Religious consequences of the environmental movement in the countercultural context.
From the perspective of a natural history of religions, Thelema is thus prior to neo-paganism, and the latter should be considered a development of the former, rather than the other way around, as many contemporary students of "alternative religions" presume.

Love is the law, love under will.
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by Tim Maroney

In this column I will be looking at magical and mystical issues from a skeptical perspective.

On a recent web-surfing expedition I discovered a web site dedicated to "progressive Thelema", and its introduction praised the virtue of skepticism. This interested me because doubt is one of my paradigmatic emotions -- a restless inquisitiveness that upon hearing a comforting explanation, immediately asks "what if just the opposite were true?" Reading on, I was disappointed to find that the first essay on the page took astrology for its starting point. It spun out corollary upon corollary from this unquestioned assumption, as if the influence of planetary positions on earthly life were an established fact.

What does it mean to be a skeptic? Classical skeptics such as Pyrrho, Timon and Sextus Empiricus were no kin to the current crop of debunkers. In the pages of the

magazine "Skeptical Inquirer" one finds a philosophy of naive materialism and literal truth, but classical skepticism doubted even the existence of matter, and more, doubted that there was any reliable way to draw a distinction between truth and falsehood. A skeptic is one who doubts. The self-described "skeptic" of today is an ideological soldier for scientism, focusing doubt only against rival systems of thought and treating the preferred ideology with deference. A closer modern analogy to the skeptics of old can be found in the philosophies of existentialism and postmodernism, which recognize the individual's role in creating meaning, and treat value judgments as psychological processes.

Doubt is an emotion which all of us possess in greater or lesser degree, and which we apply to various subjects at various times. It is not necessary that everyone be a skeptic, only that people who describe themselves as skeptics earn the title. But to claim one is a skeptic while persistently turning a blind eye to the problems in one's pet theories is to fall short of the mark. This is just as true of those who propound specious refutations of astrology as it is of those who take the horoscope theory as a given.

The transformative power of doubt is such that even when turned to merely ideological ends it may lead to breakthroughs. One-sided debunkers

such as Randi have done us a service when they have exposed real charlatans, and they deserve to be proud of that. Of all the strange theories in magic, one might doubt only the Renaissance metaphysical idea that the basis of reality can be found in Hebrew letters; perhaps like Guido von List one might be motivated by an anti-Semitic ideology in this doubt. Even so, such a great wealth of excellent thoughts might arise from this ideologically-motivated re-examination of the foundations of metaphysics that the honorific "skeptical" would seem richly deserved. Even partial skepticism is compelling and useful.

Neo-materialists are more likely than mystics to call themselves skeptics. In the popular mind skepticism is associated with rationality and science, and opposed to visions, dreams, fancies, and the imagination. Classical skeptics were anti-rationalists, though -- they doubted the accuracy of intellectual methods and turned reason to an exploration of its own limits, much as Godel's Theorem in the 20th century has shown through the most stringent argument that the most stringent argument always leaves something out. The modern skeptical movement has failed to come to terms with the fact that mathematics, the basis of science, has deconstructed itself, that "reason is a lie; for there is a factor infinite & unknown; & all their words are skew-wise."

It is a mistake to think that skeptics must be opposed to the non-rational psychological phenomena of mysticism. What does it mean to be this peculiar thing, the skeptical mystic -- that is, a true skeptic who is also very concerned with experiencing and understanding what we are accustomed to calling the "spiritual"? For me the answer lies in a psychological paradigm called phenomenology. It is a subtle thing, and for years I

could not grasp the notion, but now it has become fundamental in my approach. It revolves around acceptance of psychological reality as true on its own plane, without concern for its external truth. Rather than looking at materials of myth and trance from the judgmental perspective that classes them into truths and delusions, one simply observes them and tries to describe them. This is a basic principle guiding the ethnographic field observation methodology of anthropologists, a perspective that is both detached and engaged -- the self-referentially aware perspective of the participant-observer.

So for instance let us say one has a vision. I find modern science produces many remarkable visions for me, whether I am soaring above the galaxies or delving beneath the nuclei of atoms. One of these visions has been that all reality lies on a self-similar fractal substrate of Planck-scale quantum foam, in which the progression of time occurs by the replication of intervals through an inductive process that is parallel to the division of living cells. I do not know whether this strange idea born during a psychedelic meditation is true as a physical theory, any more than I know whether the Scorpionic elements of my character are due to the sign the Sun occupied when I was born (or would have occupied on the same date a few thousand years ago). Personally I would like the space-time theory to be true, and I would like the horoscopic theory to be false, but in some ways these judgmental desires are irrelevant. The ideas exist as ideas; they influence me; they often move me deeply. Although they are fiction they are no less important to me.

The conception of space-time as a biological process has provided a poetic framework that often emerges into my perceptions at unexpected moments and helps me to contextualize such phenomena as the apparent transformations of space and time that happen in ritual and meditation. If my skepticism were overdeveloped and lacked phenomenological detachment I would probably never have allowed this unproven and presumably false idea to form fully in my mind. Similarly I find that contemplation of the Scorpionic alchemical formula of redemption through putrefaction leads to what feels like a deep engagement of the work of the decadent poets and the reclamation of Satanic and other demonized symbols. I feel I have a special connection to this formula through my Sun sign. As a student of psychology I realize that the horoscopic theory is almost certainly false, but that is an intellectual knowledge rather than a feeling. My feeling is irrational but I have it.

I do study the science of psychology and in the course of this I come to some more or less definite ideas about what is true or false. Although I recognize that scientific truth exists only within a framework of assumptions which itself is unreliable, I often find it useful to think as if scientific methods were valid. I do not believe, for instance, that phrenology, palmistry or astrology deal with actual determinants of personality. However, I accept that people can come to self-knowledge through these methods, that experiences of insight are real on the level of psychological processes. While from my perspective this is meant as a compliment, mystics that I talk to sometimes misunderstand it as an insult. They think I am saying "it's all in your mind." Society insults the imagination -- if

it's in your mind, there must be something wrong with it. My perspective is just the opposite. Since I believe that nothing external is sacred in itself but that a thing only acquires sacredness through the human attachment of sacral attributes to perceptions, then it is a small step to a view of the mind-stuff as the seat of sacredness, and so as sacred in itself. As a phenomenologist I do not require external validation, such as proof that flowers really are beautiful or that sex really does reflect the cosmic process. I simply note the reality of the psychological process by which things seem to be so.

In future columns I hope to discuss such issues as directing skepticism at materialism, at metaphysics, and even back at skepticism; scientific arguments about astrology; the irrational bases of rationality; the origins of the modern "skeptical" movement; the use of science as a modern mythology; theories of the nature of the mind; belief requirements in movements that claim to have no dogmas; and how and why to remain skeptical in the face of overwhelming personal evidence of the paranormal. I hope to see you there -- even if perhaps you are only a figment of my imagination!

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Cosmic Egg

COVER ARTIST: Criss Piss

In this issue we continue our special feature of the artwork of Criss Piss.

For the article introducing his art, [click here](#).

Art and Artists in This Issue

Cosmic Egg - Criss Piss

Nuit and Hadit - Criss Piss

Septagram - Soror Conscientia Clara

Untitled - Martijn Benders

Chakra - Frater Parser Coaccidence

Pentagram - Soror Conscientia Clara

Sprite - Kiri Namtvedt

Consume It - Qadisha

Science - Qadisha

Detail - Gustav Dore

The Scarlet Letter is always looking for talented Thelemic artists.

If you are interested in submitting, please e-mail Soror Qadisha.

[Return to Table of Contents](#) Grok Discovers Air

Portrait of the Cro-Magnum as a Young Man

One chapter

in the continuing saga of

Grok

70,000 BCE

by Omega Baphomet

As you know, Grok was a famous French Cro-Magnum who lived in our fair land of wine and cheese some 72,000 years ago. Grok spoke a very crude form of language which we would have to call proto-proto-indo-european. Grok lived in a tribe with twenty or thirty (it varied with the season and the rain) other Cro-Magnums in what is now Lyons, France. They called themselves the Kapooey, and they mostly ate nuts, mushrooms, berries, antelope, and an occasional mammoth or bear. They considered themselves very advanced since they had evolved along with their tools and now sported the ability to start fires, and were armed with flint spears. The Kapooey had been living for several generations in a nest of caves where bears had been living before them. Most of the stories that the old people told were about the various ways that the bears had been forced out. Bears still were very numerous, very dangerous, and quite often would spontaneously appear and try to force a Kapooey out his own cave. These stories were taken very literally by everyone.

One day while Grok was out collecting mushrooms and he decided to play with his breath. This was a common children's game among the Kapooey tribesmen, and was often used to break the boredom of picking mushrooms all day long. Grok decided that he would see how long he could hold his breath. Grok would breath in slowly, then force himself to hold his breath for as long as possible. Early in the afternoon when it was warming up a bit, Grok sat down under a tree and took off a few of his fur pieces. Lounging around eating his mushrooms, Grok played holding his breath again. But this time when he breathed out, he did so in such a manner that a great deal of spore was blown off the head of a large mushroom he was about to eat. Now Grok had seen this happen before, but had never seen it so clearly.

Grok picked up another mushroom and tried it again. He breathed in very deep, held his breath for as long as possible, and blew out in exactly the same way. Mushroom spore was blown in the air. Grok was amazed. He hadn't thought of it before, because he had just never really sat down and thought about it, but it seemed to Grok that everytime he breathed out some invisible stuff came out. Grok put his hand up to his nose. He breathed in, and he breathed out. Grok's eyes opened. It had felt to him like some invisible stuff went in when he breathed in, and came out when he breathed out.

Grok stood up and started flailing his arms around him. Grok could feel some thing all around him. Grok flapped his hands wildly about his face and could feel the stuff brushing his cheek. Grok started laughing hysterically, jumping up and down, and flailing his arms about him. Grok thought, "since this stuff is invisible, and it's everywhere, it must have a name." But he had never heard of it, or heard a story about it. So Grok decided to give it two names and put them one after the other and make it twice as long at the regular names that they gave to non-human things. Grok decided to call it Invisible Stuff, which in his language sounded like AE' *HER. Grok stood there with his eyes closed, and his hands up in the air, and he screamed out over and over again: "AE'*HER! AE'*HER! AE'*HER!"

"Grok?"

Grok stopped screaming and opened his eyes. It was Philo his brother's youngest son. Philo had as many suns as Grok had fingers and toes, that is to say, eighteen and a half.

"Philo! I find big Invisible Stuff! I find Ae'*Her!" Philo ran up to Grok and started looking around vigorously.

"Where? Where is big Invisible Stuff?"

Grok laughed and, stepping out, started flailing his arms all around him.

"It is here! It is all around us! I find Ae'*Her!"

Philo's bright smiling face began to fade slowly into a stern confusion. "Big Invisible Stuff is where?"

Grok went up Philo and began to fan his own face. "Do this, Philo, make your hand jump up and down, and you will feel big Invisible Stuff brush your face like a woman's hair. See!" Grok, again, started fanning his own face.

Philo was getting very disturbed. He slowly lifted his hand up in the air near his face, looked at Grok a few moments, and then slowly lowered it down. "I do not feel this big Invisible Stuff. Have you eaten too many mushrooms uncle?"

"No! I only ate two handfuls. But you have to make hand go fast. See!" Again, Grok demonstrated.

Philo became very afraid. Grok was beginning to act like an Owl Hunter and Philo felt that he needed to go back and warn the tribe. So the next time Grok started jumping up and down screaming Ae'*Her, Philo took the opportunity to run away as fast as he could. Looking back over his shoulder he saw that Grok wasn't following him, so Philo relaxed and began to wonder how to warn the tribe.

Philo found an elder named Booord and related the story to him the best he could in broken Kapooy. Booord began to laugh.

"Grok is no Owl Hunter," he said, "Grok eat too many mushrooms. He is Dream Man!"

Philo started smiling too. "Yes! Grok is no Owl Hunter! Grok is Dream Man!" Then Philo started laughing too, and he went away to tell everyone in the tribe how Grok ate too many mushrooms that day and was a Dream Man.

That night, like every night, after nuts and berries and mushrooms, the Kapooy started a big fire. Then they danced naked around the fire and jumped up and down. Then, later, everyone sat down to hear stories. By consensus everyone wanted to hear Grok

tell about that day's mushroom hunting trip.

Grok became very serious and began to relate how he discovered Ae'*Her, the big Invisible Stuff. But as he began to expound upon the details of his experience using big hand movements, exaggerated walks, and sequences of "Ohh!" and "Ahh!" his fellow tribesmen became very disturbed. Finally Booord stood up and everyone fell silent. He spoke directly to Grok: "We no like big Invisible Stuff, so we think you must be Dream Man."

Grok felt a great pressure on his chest and stepped back a foot. "I am no Dream Man. I feel big Invisible Stuff. I feel Ae'*Her. See!" And Grok rushed up to him and began fanning his own face.

Booord slowly lifted his hand up in the air near his face, looked at Grok a few moments, and then slowly lowered it down. "I do not feel this big Invisible Stuff. You have eaten too many mushrooms. You are Dream Man. We no like big Invisible Stuff. We no like Ae'*Her." Then Booord turned around and went to his cave. Everyone else followed suit, and Grok was left alone by the dying fire. He had never felt so lonely.

The next day was worse. All the tribe's children threw mud at him, and everytime he tried to have sex with his cave mate she ran away screaming "Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her!" Finally she went to her sister's cave and Grok was left alone. He was a very frustrated young Cro-Magnum. But all this was forgotten by mid-Afternoon when a Kapooey tribeswomen came back crying that she had been attacked in the woods by a monster.

Indeed, about this time, a large Neanderthal tribe had moved into the woods which were adjacent to the Kapooey's cave complex. The Kapooey called the Neanderthals "Monster People", and this name was very descriptive. A few Kapooey elders remembered stories about these Neanderthals, and warned the tribe that they were very very bad. Everyone was worried.

Soon a few Neanderthals came close and looked at the caves. They raped a few Kapooey tribeswomen, stole as many nuts and berries as they could with their bare hands and went back into the woods. That night the Kapooey had an extra large fire and were only able to keep Neanderthal marauders out of their caves by waving fire and throwing spears. Everyone in the Kapooey tribe knew that they were in very grave danger. Their food was low, as always, and they couldn't go out and get more without the Neanderthals attacking them. Booord decided to leave a few men to guard the women and children hidden in the largest cave (Booord's own cave as a matter of fact) and to force a confrontation as soon as the sun jumped out of the ground.

Sprite by Kiri Namtvedt

And, sure enough, as soon as the sun came up Booord led the majority of the men in the tribe to the Neanderthal's spot in the woods, and woke them up by killing off the first half-dozen Neanderthals that they came across, spearing them in their heads as they

slept and screaming “Monster People Die! Monster People Die!” This commotion, however, woke the other Neanderthal’s up and chaos broke out. The Cro-Magnum were lighter and had many spears, but the Neanderthal were very, very strong and threw large rocks. Since the Neanderthals outnumbered the Kapooey tribesmen by a factor of three to one, the Kapooey were quickly driven back to Booord’s cave where they were able to finally stop the Neanderthals. Fortunately, Booord’s cave was blessed with a very small entrance tunnel and only one Neanderthal could fit at a time. Nonetheless, the Kapooey had to kill half a dozen Neanderthals before they stopped trying to force their way in.

The Kapooey stayed holed up in Booord’s cave for almost twenty-four hours before thirst, hunger, and stench forced a few of them to venture out. Philo, who was small and fast, volunteered to go and look. He came back quickly.

“The Monster People are living in our caves. Also they are pissing and shitting all over everything so that it smells like them!”

A mumur broke out amongst the tribesmen. Booord was very afraid. He did not know what to do. Maybe they would all die? Suddenly, from the rear, Grok spoke up.

“I have idea. I will use big Invisible Stuff to make the Monster People go away.”

All the Kapooey men turned and looked at him with dumb expressions on their faces. Even Booord was stunned.

“We no like big Invisible Stuff,” Booord said, “We no use your Ae’*Her to make the Monster People go away. We take spears and kill them in their sleep.”

“But Booord,” Philo said, “that did not work. When we shout ‘Monster People Die’ they all wake up and start to kill us! And there are more of them!” Booord scratched his head. What to do? Grok spoke up again.

“If Ae’*Her is good thing, and I not Dream Man, then I confuse Monster People’s eyes and Kapooey run out with spears and Monster People die. Then everyone say big Invisible Stuff is good. If Ae’*Her is a bad thing, then Monster People kill Grok with their stones, and everyone say big Invisible Stuff is bad.”

Grok’s speech was very eloquent and no one could understand it all, but it was clear to everyone that Grok would run out to confuse them and that they would then make Monster People die. Also, it seemed clear to most of them that this would mean that Ae’*Her was good. So all the tribesmen lifted up their spears and started chanting “Go Grok! Go Grok! Go Grok!” Even Booord joined in.

Grok lifted his hands up over his head and started out the cave. As he went out he chanted Ae’*Her over and over again.

The Neanderthals, around this time, were busy peeing and shitting on everything to make it smell more like them. So they were very very surprised when Grok, a skinny little Cro-Magnum, came walking slowly out of his cave with his hands up over his head shouting Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! They were so amazed, in fact, that they just stopped what they were doing and looked at him with dumb expressions on their faces.

Thus, Grok was able to walk unhindered all the way to the fire pit. Since there had been no fire the night before he just stepped over the giant stone rim, and waddled directly into the middle of the cold grey ash. The ash was, in fact, so deep that it came up to Grok's knees. He just stood there with his hands over his head shouting Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her! Ae'*Her!

Now, even though they had low sloping foreheads, the Neanderthal were very fascinated by this whole thing and so the whole Neanderthal tribe walked over to the fire pit and formed a ring around Grok while he stood there shouting. Also, the Neanderthals looked at each other and scratched their heads. Even the Neanderthal women were there with their Neanderthal children in their arms. This would be a story they would grunt to each other about for hours.

Grok let his shouting fade very slowly until he was whispering so softly that the Neanderthals had to cock their heads to hear him. The Kapooey tribesmen, of course, also didn't know what was going on.

Grok turned and looked at the Monster People. There were as many of them as fingers and toes on two people¹, but there were only as many male Neanderthals as there were fingers and toes on both hands and one foot. Grok knew that the Kapooey had as many male tribesmen with spears as there were fingers on the two hands, so he knew that what he had in mind might actually work.

Grok turned and faced the largest, ugliest, meanest Neanderthal Man. He had a giant bone necklace, so Grok decided to name him "Bone Man." Next to Bone Man was a Neanderthal woman with large hanging breasts and an antelope bone through her nose. Grok decided to name her "Breast Woman." Grok pointed his finger at Breast Woman and motioned for her to come to him and have sex. Without thinking, of course, Breast Woman stepped over the rock rim of the fire pit and started walking towards him. Bone Man became furious, grabbed Breast Woman and pulled her out of the fire pit. Then Bone Man made a loud grunt, the other Neanderthal men grunted too, and all of them stepped into the fire pit to kill Grok.

But they never made it, for ere Bone Man made three steps into the fire pit, Grok picked up two heaping handfuls of ash and started furiously blowing it into his face. Bone Man fell to his knees and started wiping his eyes, but ash was everywhere and this only made it worse. Quickly, and spryly, before the slow moving Neanderthals could react, Grok blew ash into all their eyes. All fifteen Neanderthal men stood frantically grunting and wiping more and more ash into their eyes.

Back at the mouth of Booord's cave the Kapooey were astonished. They saw the Neanderthals surround Grok, and they all became very quiet. When Grok motioned to the Monster People woman and she started walking towards him they all laughed. But when they saw the Monster People men start in towards him they all clutched each other in morbid fear. Grok would not live to see the sun fall back into the earth. And all Grok did was run blowing Ae'*Her in their faces.

"What is he doing with the Ae'*Her?" Booord asked Philo.

"He is using the big Invisible Stuff to blow fire dust in their faces."

"Why is he doing that?" Booord asked.

"I ... I ... I do not know," Philo replied, shaking his head in disbelief that his uncle was about to be killed. But, Grok still wasn't dead.

"Why is Grok not dead?" Booord asked Philo.

"Because the Monster People's men are walking around blind and stumbling into each other." Philo jumped to his feet. "Look!" he said. The Kapooey tribesmen looked very close. "The Monster People's men are walking around blind and stumbling into each other!"

"So?" Booord asked.

"Monster People Die!" Philo cried out, "Monster People Die!"

There was a great hush that fell on the Kapooey tribesmen. They were very confused. They looked very carefully at the Monster People's men who were, by now, all on their knees grunting and rubbing more ash in their eyes. Grok was running towards Booord's cave. He came up to the mouth of the cave, grabbed his spear, and started running back to the fire pit screaming "Monster People Die! Monster People Die! Monster People Die!"

Suddenly the tribesmen understood. The Monster People's men were walking around blind and were stumbling into each other. And the Kapooey had spears! So, all at once, the Kapooey tribesmen rushed down to the fire pit screaming "Monster People Die! Monster People Die! Monster People Die!" And in a few minutes the Kapooey had killed every single Neanderthal man, woman, and child. Grok, and the big Invisible Stuff, had saved the World.

That night, after dancing naked around the fire, Grok went up to every person in his tribe and blew Ae'*Her in their face. "The big Invisible Stuff, Ae'*Her, is good stuff!" he said, and everyone agreed.

1 About thirty-seven.

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Art & Illustrations

The Scarlet Letter Staff
Content Knowles (Sr. N.V. Continuity P.) - Editor
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From The Camel's Back

by
N. V. Continuity P.
As Scarlet Woman dances into her fifth year as a local body (I think of her more as a universal body, or I think of her universal body, or something like that), she does so as a Lodge. As is usual among my species, this passing of an important milestone causes me to reflect on our collective history. In the last four years, a tight cohesive working group has developed in Austin, as has community and family and the thickening and

maturing of fraternal bonds. I have commented before about the closeness and the quality of the relationships and the love, the love, that floats us as we travel together toward the Great Sea. The egregore remains strong and elastic. She stretches to admit the new, she bends her starry body and embowers the dwellers of the Camp of Friends. We have been thrice blessed, and together, we have built something we can be proud of.

We have married and buried our brothers and sisters. We have witnessed the birth of babies and the initiation of dozens of siblings. We have welcomed people into our Sanctuary and our Temple for hundreds of ceremonies; E.G.C. and M.M.M., and those that we devised. We have celebrated each other's triumphs and anniversaries and name days and Greater Feasts, and we have grieved and mourned our losses. We have chased away evil demons, and invoked fresh new Gods. We have been happily honored by a fascinating parade of visitors. We have seen a King newly made. We have been thrice blessed, together.

And the wheel turns. I thank everyone; especially those who have served the Camp, the Oasis, and the Lodge as an officer. That's a fairly large number of people, according to my reckoning. I particularly want to notice Oalimn, who served as Senechal for almost three years and provided us with dozens of gorgeous, delicious, and elegant feasts; and Sharash, who has been the editor of the Scarlet Letter since its inception in 1993. He brought it from a newsletter to journal, by consistently upgrading the quality and raising its editorial and publishing standards whenever he could. Vol IV, no 1, was his last issue; he is now free from the dread deadline, which, like the proverbial hot potato, has passed to me. This is ironic because every Letter that has been late has been at least partially stymied due to my inability to sit down and churn out editorials on time. Now, I have no one to blame but myself. And if your Scarlet Letter is tardy, you know who to write to.....

Luckily, I now share the editorship of the Scarlet Letter with Aisha Qadisha, which is good news for the Thelemic arts community. If you want to familiarize yourself with our work as individual artists/writers, be sure to visit our homepages, which are handily linked off the Scarlet Woman Lodge mainpage at <<http://www.scarletwoman.org/>> We confidently expect to put the entire Scarlet Letter on-line in a special edition that will include full color art (one of the great advantages of cyberpublishing). Look for us online in July. Besides a new look, the SL will include interviews with people we are interested in (Mack White and Harvey Bialy are on deck), as well as the archival material, rituals, original commentary and review, fiction, and art that you have come to expect from us. As always, we welcome submissions from new contributors. Please write to me (e or snail) if you have any questions or comments.

We continue to be interested in cyberpublishing and cybercommunication. The O.T.O. is currently comprised of less than 3000 initiate members, of which about 1700 live in the USA - numbers wise we could probably buy all the seats at a decent size multiplex theater (not that I would want to go to one - or that all the initiates would happily agree to go to the same 10 movies. But that's another editorial). The Order is growing at a

steady rate, but our membership roles are really very small with the happy corollary that one has a good chance of familiarizing oneself with a high percentage of siblings. We're kind of far flung, but cybercommunication changes everything. Take myself as an example. I got online in December. It's now June. I have doubled the number of initiates with whom I regularly directly communicate in just six months, and have access to information about the activities and interests of local bodies which were just names in the Magical Link previously.

Cybertravel opens your brain. Net culture gives you the soapbox you've always wanted and have just known you deserved. Nothing can stop you from publishing as much as you can write, and promoting the hell out of it when you are done. Everybody has regular access to the microphone. Okay, not everybody. But it's really pretty easy and it doesn't cost that much to get started. If you get connected, you can get free e-mail and a free webpage. You can get lots of them. You can start your own empire or newsgroup or ring or network, or you can make up some new thing that I don't know about yet. Manifest destiny is alive and well in the virtual world. Loose tentacles and electronic pamphleteering. Information out of bounds. Very few rules.....just the way we like it.

Suddenly, world travel is demystified and made less intimidating. After all, one can hardly remain a stranger for long in a land where one's sisters and brothers live. I used to think that a certain amount of social distance was inevitable when geographical distance existed, but I don't believe that anymore. Get yourself a modem! Make a point to travel around and meet your Order kin. Come and visit us. Maybe we'll be visiting you someday soon. Hopefully, we'll be seeing many of you at the O.T.O. National Conference in Akron in August. In the meantime, may you be thrice blessed!

Originally published in The Scarlet Letter Vol II, no. 2
by Content Love Knowles
Back to the Table of ContentsTHE MAGICAL DIARIES
OF ETHEL ARCHER
Edited by Sr. N.V. Contintuity P.

(Continued from our last issue; more entries from the journal of Ethel Archer. A student of Crowley's, and member of the A.A., she was a frequent contributor to the Equinox and appears in several numbers of the first volume. She was married to its editor, E.G. Weiland, and together they participated in the rich blend of magical, artistic, and social activity that emanated from its offices. These notes were copied from loose pages by Gerald Yorke, and come from his private collection. It's worth it to note that these astral journeys took place 85 years ago - and we have no way of knowing whether E.A. was an infrequent diarist, or or if there were other pages, now lost to time. - N.V.C.P., editor)

March 2nd.

Asana in God position. Time 12:15pm till 1:30pm.

Concentrating on a golden ankh. Great difficulty in keeping mind fixed at first. Then

strange automatic breathing just as I was about to be absorbed into an immense ankh. This continued some little time; also my throat got dry. The strange breathing ceased as I was doing pranayama quite noiselessly and regularly. Then I seemed to expand or rather a nebulous form of myself that surrounded me seemed to do so - I was a powerful Egyptian god; at the same time I was an ankh, which expanded and contracted as I breathed. The breath seemed as a golden light travelling round the ankh (much as an electric sign does, it is difficult to describe) but the ankh (that was myself) was formed as the breath or the light travelled round it and was contracted and expanded like this

(drawing, not copied by Gerald Yorke)

June 4, 1912 Between 2 am and 4 am

Astral journey. Rather curious. Had a lot of trouble to get away but very little to get 'out of myself'. E. G. (her husband -ed.) was enveloped in golden smoke, then was surrounded by a glowing red mist which burnt as a furnace: then saw odd pictures, viz -- 'a man seated at a table leaning his head on his hands, dressed in a brown costume, Jacobean or Cromwellian,' then a looking glass flashed at the end of a long room, etc. etc. Finally I was at the head of a staircase facing east, where was an open window. Doing 'the enterer' I projected myself with great force and shot like an arrow from a bow far out of the window and across a beautiful country. Very green it was, with many trees and meadows but no hills. I came to a wall, it was perpendicular and built of reddish looking bricks: with some difficulty I rose upwards and presently arrived at the top. There was a species of tablet let into it. Somewhat like a coat of arms. It was very distinct and I tried to understand it, it may have been some strange language, but my present memory makes it something like this

(and once again, <small> drawing, not copied by Gerald Yorke)

The squares were black and white and there was a species of fleur de lys. I stayed a long while trying to decipher it and then realising that I ought not to remain stationary I rose above the wall. Apparently it surrounded a city which was enveloped in a dark grey shadow. A hill loomed through the darkness and dimly silhouetted at its base were two black calvary crosses, a third was in the center at its summit, the three forming a triangle. As I looked the cross which formed the apex of the triangle seemed to come downwards and the others to go upwards, so that it formed some symbol but I couldn't be quite sure.

At the foot of the hill were many white stones some with inscriptions and I realised that it was the cemetery and remembered Golgotha.

I returned to earth and came to a room where were Bunco (her husband) and Rosher (later was in the Golden Dawn, I think - Gerald Yorke) and a man named Mueller. I tried to explain the coat of arms I had seen on the wall and Rosher said he knew it well, but where had I seen it. I told him. The rest was muddled and I woke feeling very tired.

June 21, 1912

Had a rather curious experience last night; at first it was rather pleasant. I seemed to be tingling all over as though electrified, this seemed to go on for hours. I got very restless: finally decided to go on an astral journey. The tingling got very much more violent till it approached a burning irritation and skin seemed all prickling. I tried to push back the bedclothes when suddenly my hand came in contact with another hand and arm. It was horrible, like soft india-rubber, but very strong; I tried in vain to tear the thing away and finally got rid of it by assuming the God Horus. Invoking Thoum-ash-neith and doing 'the Enterer' I got away.. I didn't know whete to to but I thought vaguely of one of the planets; either Jupiter, Mars, or Venus. My memory seemed to have gone completely, even as it has now. I did not know a single name or sigil or even the correct pentagrams. It was raining. I went a long way through a damp cloudy atmosphere till I got to what seemed a strange building with an arched iron roof, it was very grey and shadowy, several signs and sigils seemed to float past, but I could not recognise them. Then I remember distinctly it was a Black Tau inverted, also the sigil of Venus.

I decided to go to Venus and journeying out of the iron domed roof I went through more and more clouds, till I finally stopped in the midst of darkness - and I realised that I should not be able to meet any challenge or even make a sign, all I could remember in regard to Venus was the name AHA which I repeated boldly several times. A dark cloud slowly parted and before me appeared what at first seemed a wonderful ivory statue of the most perfect athlete, the muscles rippling down the magnificent limbs; I could not see the face but it was very terrible and the whole figure seemed literally bristling with wrath. The left arm was raised in a menacing manner and carried what I suppose was a specus (sic - spear?- G.J.Y.) or scimitar. but it seemed at first more like a large quill. Behind the white figure a little to the left was a black angel equally beautiful in demoniac fashion; and vaguely seen were several other heads, all very frightful. The white figure literally scorched my eyes to look at and whilst I was gazing in blasphemous defiance and ignorance suddenly lunged forward and brought his arm down. A streak of lightning seemed to strike my eyes and for several seconds I felt as if blinded. Then I was back again, but not before I had seen an immense figure standing with its arms out in cruciform fashion. The black angel remained for several seconds (?) after I had been struck and the demon heads were the last to go.

Strangely enough I did not feel fear, merely annoyance that I did not know the signs.

The clock struck 2 just as I fully woke up.

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[Pre-Crowley Pronunciamenti](#)

by Th. Reuss & C. Kellner

translated with a commentary by M. Rogers

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Links of related interest

The source texts for the translations were reprints in the June 1992 e.v. issue of AHA of the articles in the original German.

Th. Reuss: What We Instruct and Intend (1910 e.v.)

We have nothing to do with the pursuit or realization of political objectives, as is

presently the case not only in the Lodges of Latin and Eastern countries, but also in Germanic countries.

We strive after the knowledge of the Creator of all worlds, and after conscious union with Him. We teach that the first prerequisite on the path of this knowledge is the true, genuine knowledge of oneself.

This genuine self-knowledge is the cornerstone of the esoteric temple in the heart of man. Once this first step is mounted, then the neophyte can begin his journey. It must be done in iron-clad secrecy. The way is dark, but from the distance, the Holy Graal sheds its blood-red, brilliant gleam of the most selfless love of humanity, illuminating the path of the earnest seeker. This traveller has difficult problems to face, but true steadfastness is the entreaty of the fellowship of esoteric Templars and Rosicrucians, on whom the "Light from the East" endlessly shines in its highest purity.

This goal is a wholly esoteric one, and its accomplishment would lead to complete detachment from worldly concerns, if we did not have the courage to extract from our teachings their consequences for everyday life. If we gauge the manifestations of contemporary daily life with the standards of our philosophy of life and our idea of God, we find that popular life suffers from its perception of woman, that motherhood is no longer the highest aim of woman.

Therefore we endeavor exoterically, in the practical development of our teachings, to see that in the future the mother will be honored as the High Priestess of her family. Each woman blessed with child is for us a saint; she is a symbol of the incarnation of the creative power of God. As High Priestess of her domestic circle and her family, the mother should be the keeper of the sacred fire, the dispenser of mystic benediction.

It is thus discernable that we are not monists, but rather the staunchest advocates of the dualistic conception of the godhead. A Freemason cannot be a monist at all, because his highest symbol is the double triangle united in itself, the symbol which gives expression to the duality of the idea of God. Without the friction which results from the contact of positive with negative throughout the cosmos, there is no "fire." And without "fire" there is no creation, and correspondingly no generation of new essences, and nothing at all exists. We consider the primal energy to be dual, as father-mother, to which in everything returns in its cycle. In order to make our interpretation of the deity comprehensible to common understanding, we borrow for ourselves the words which served King Johann von Sachsen, that he might declare his creed:

Ein Gott dort oben, unser aller Vater,
Wir alle Brüder drum;
Der Tod ein Hiemgang zum Vater nur!

(One God on high, the Father of All,
Before Him we are all Brothers;
Death is only a homecoming to the Father.)

We are energetic proponents of an elegantly ramified high-degree ritual, but for us the Masonic ritual is only a means to an end, not an end in itself. We demand from each candidate the utmost fulfillment of duty, in his profane occupation, and to the Order as well. No candidate has a prospect of becoming a full initiate in under seven years.

Seal of Reuss

Of the Mysteries of the Occult High Degrees of Our Order

Th. Reuss and C. Kellner

A manifesto of the Grand Orient

(1903 e.v.)

One of the mysteries which our Order has in the possession of its highest degrees, is that it provides the suitably prepared Brother with the practical means to rebuild the true temple of Solomon in man, to recover the "lost word." This means that our Order furnishes the initiated and selected Brother with the practical means to obtain proof of his immortality in this earthly life.

However, these practical means are no "spirit summonings" or other "spiritualistic practices." They are rather concerned only with the inner voice and inner sense of the candidate himself, and they strongly and directly exclude and condemn all spiritualistic practices.

This mystery is one of the true Masonic secrets, and is exclusively the secret of the occult high degrees of our Order. It comes to our Order by oral tradition from the fathers of all true Freemasonry. These "wise men from the East" delivered it to us by word of mouth, and we also will only dispense it thus. Obviously the success of this practical instruction depends in turn on the candidate's own attainment to this mystery.

For what is the use of giving the best, proven and detailed directions to a student who wants to learn to swim, if he will not move his own hands and feet once in the water? Or what is the use of giving a student the most comprehensive lessons in painting, and preparing the most brilliant pigments for him? If he will not take up the brush with his own hand to mix the colors, he will never be an artist.

Those Brethren who discovered this secret guarded it as an exquisite, hard-won possession. In order that ordinary people would not misunderstand or even ridicule it, they hid it under symbols, just as we do to this day.

Now these symbols are no arbitrarily chosen images, not established by chance. They are rather grounded in the attributes of God and Humanity, and we must regard them as archetypes. But we will never mistake the form, the vessel, the ritual, or the symbols for the inner essence. Instead, we seek the spiritual essence through the form, and once we have discovered it and established it in ourselves, we recognize from the spiritual essence the absolute necessity of the form, the rituals and the symbolism.

Our high degrees thus give the Brother the chance to attain a secure proof of human

immortality, which has always been the great desire of thinking humanity. Humans need this assurance of survival after death in order to be truly happy in this life. Therefore the mysteries of all religions and wisdom schools have occupied themselves with this question as their highest and grandest concern. The Church also naturally concerns itself with the solution to this question of the "lost word," i.e. the "lost eternal life." But they have always relegated the seeker to the way of grace, and constantly represented it as a gift, and not as something to be earned for oneself. Our Order, however, considers it in the potentiality of each individual seeker, by application of practical means, to unite himself in this life with the universal consciousness, the original power of creation.

Originally published in German in Die Oriflamme 1904 e.v.

Translator's comments on the papers

"Was wir lehren und erstreben"

and "Von der Geheimnissen der okkulten Hochgraden unseres Ordens"

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

These two papers were written by Frater Superior Reuss before the adoption of the Law of Thelema by O.T.O. They reflect certain features of the Order that have since undergone alteration, as well as shedding light on the original purpose and continuing essence of the Order.

Probably the most obvious feature of these papers is the extent to which they identify "our Order" with Freemasonry. Prior to his work with O.T.O., Reuss had been a principal organizer of the "Illuminati Order," which billed itself as a revival of the clandestine society begun by ex-Jesuit Adam Weishaupt in 1776 e.v. The original Illuminati were infamous for their efforts to infiltrate Continental Masonry and bend it to their political programme. Reuss' Illuminati were apparently an independent quasi-masonic initiatory society of roughly ten degrees, but Reuss appears to have had more ambitious goals for O.T.O. (Under Reuss, the title of IX° O.T.O. was "Perfect Illuminatus.")

With a charter to work the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Masonry, Reuss considered O.T.O. to be possessed of sufficient Masonic legitimacy to serve as the governing agency in an international union of Masonic rites, but he approached that ambition sidelong, under the guise of an "Academia Masonica," i.e. a mystery school to which initiated Masons would apply for further instruction--setting the highest degrees of the Order one organizational stage past the other high degree rites of the day. National sections like Crowley's *Mysteria Mystica Maxima* conferred degrees up to VII° as the equivalent of the 33 degrees of the Scottish or Cernau Rites or the degrees of the York Rite through K.T. Reuss encouraged existing Masonic initiates and lodges to affiliate wholesale, transferring their dues obligations from their original grand lodges to O.T.O., and receiving recognition for equivalent degrees. The "Occult High Degrees of our Order" were the O.T.O. proper, the international "Academia Masonica" with custody of "the supreme secret."

Crowley entered the Order as a VII° initiate, in recognition of his 33° status conferred

under the Scottish Rite. But it was under his later administration that O.T.O. withdrew its claims to preside over or compete with Masonic authorities. Crowley had already had his fill of Masonic feuding, and he recognized that the Order under his Headship had various assets that Masonic rites could not claim, including the supreme secret, the Law of Thelema, and the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica. Accordingly, his revision of the degree system changed the title "Mason" to "Magician," and he began to publish explicit disclaimers of Masonic pretensions for the Order.

Another "dated" aspect of these papers, that results less from changes in the Order than from changes in the larger society, is the characterization of women. In "Was wir lehren..." Reuss emphasizes the virtue of motherhood and the presidency of women in the home. To our eyes, this at first seems to be counter-feminist propaganda of the worst sort: women should only aspire to be mothers, and they should confine their authority to the domestic sphere, keeping safely out of public life. While the presentation is one that is inappropriate today, it is important to see it in the context of German life of the period, as well as the context of the paper in which it appears.

Domestic patriarchy was a fact of life in Germany in 1910 e.v. To give the wife authority in the home was actually to advance her status. This is not to say that Reuss was in the enlightened vanguard of gender politics. According to his writing in the "Jubilee" Oriflamme of 1912 e.v., he looked with horror on the women's suffrage movement in England. Still, even this fact demonstrates the remoteness of political parity of the sexes in Germany at that time.

What Reuss did advance, however, was the spiritual parity of the sexes, as evinced by the paragraph which follows immediately after his "High Priestess of the home" discussion. He moves directly to an exposition of a cosmology and theology that sets masculine and feminine ("positive and negative") as indispensable creative complements, describing the divine source as "father-mother." The fact that the Order was willing to initiate women on equal terms with men is also an acknowledgement of this spiritual parity, which was definitely not the rule for Masonic lodges or Christian churches.

Thus, before his exposure to and acceptance of Thelema, Reuss already felt compelled to address some aspects of the formula of the Child as the synthetic apotheosis of both masculine and feminine components. However, the subsequent adoption of the Law of "Do what thou wilt" by O.T.O. somewhat reduced the need for such position papers on the unique nature of the Order's teachings. Since that adoption, "the courage to extract from our teachings their consequences for everyday life" is bound up with the acceptance and promulgation of the Law of Thelema.

Love is the law, love under will.
Of related interest:

T Apiryon's biographical sketches of Theodor Reuss and Carl Kellner
History of Ordo Templi Orientis by Sabazius X' and AMT IX'

Kjetil Fjell's "Short Introduction to the So-called Reuss OTO Rituals"

"Pre-Crowley Pronunciamenti" was first published in The Scarlet Letter, the organ of Scarlet Woman Lodge OTO

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Introduction to Thelema

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The religion known as Thelema was founded in 1904 by the English poet and mystic Aleister Crowley (1875 - 1947), who is regarded as its prophet. Those who follow the path of Thelema are called Thelemites.

Thelemic Religious Texts

The book The Holy Books of Thelema (reference 8, below), includes most of the books which Thelemites consider to be Crowley's "inspired" texts, and which form the canon of Thelemic Holy Scripture. The chief of these is Liber AL vel Legis, sub figura CCXX, commonly called The Book of the Law. The contents of this book are rather cryptic, and Crowley has prepared a number of commentaries thereto for clarification (most of these are included in reference 3, below). Thelemites are expected to interpret the book for themselves, based on Crowley's commentaries and other writings; but are enjoined from promoting their personal interpretations to others. Another book which forms an important part of the Thelemic canon, but which is not included in The Holy Books of Thelema for technical reasons, is Liber XXX Aerum vel Saeculi, sub figura CDXVIII, commonly called The Vision and the Voice (included in reference 11 below). The I Ching and the Tarot (considered as a book of mystic illustrations rather than as a fortune-telling device), though of Pre-Thelemic origin, are also considered to be part of the informal Thelemic canon.

Theology and Essential Tenets of Thelema

The following notes on Thelemic theology are based primarily on the writings of Aleister Crowley. These notes are not intended as interpretation or commentary on The Book of the Law outside the bounds of the Prophet's writings, nor do they represent a definitive statement of Thelemic belief.

The theology of Thelema postulates all manifested existence arising from the interaction of two cosmic principles: the infinitely extended, all-pervading Space-Time Continuum; and the atomic, individually expressed Principle of Life and Wisdom. The interplay of these Principles gives rise to the Principle of Consciousness which governs existence. In the Book of the Law, the divine Principles are personified by a trinity of ancient Egyptian Divinities: Nuit, the Goddess of Infinite Space; Hadit, the Winged Serpent of Light; and Ra-Hoor-Khuit (Horus), the Solar, Hawk-Headed Lord of the Cosmos.

The Thelemic theological system utilizes the divinities of various cultures and religions as personifications of specific divine, archetypal and cosmic forces. Thelemic doctrine holds that all the diverse religions of Humanity are grounded in universal truths; and the study of comparative religion is an important discipline for many Thelemites.

With respect to concepts of the individual soul, Thelema follows traditional Hermeticism in the doctrine that each person possesses a soul or "Body of Light" which is arranged in "layers" or "sheaths" surrounding the physical body. Each individual is also considered to have his or her own personal "Augoeides" or "Holy Guardian Angel"; which can be considered both as the "higher self" and as a separate, sentient, divine being. With respect to concepts of the afterlife, life itself is considered as a continuum, with death an integral part of the whole. Mortal life dies in order that mortal life may continue. The Augoeides, however, is immortal and not subject to life or death.

Parallel to Buddhist doctrine, the Body of Light is considered to be subject to metempsychosis, or reincarnation, after the death of the body. The Body of Light is generally considered to evolve in wisdom, consciousness and spiritual power through cycles of metempsychosis for those individuals who dedicate their lives to spiritual advancement; to the point that its fate after death may ultimately be determined by the Will of the individual.

Thelema incorporates the idea of the cyclic evolution of Cultural Consciousness as well as of Personal Consciousness. History is considered to be divided into a series of "Aeons", each with its own dominant concept of divinity and its own "formula" of redemption and advancement. The current Aeon is termed the Aeon of Horus. The previous Aeon was that of Osiris, and previous to that was the Aeon of Isis. The neolithic Aeon of Isis is considered to have been dominated by the Maternal idea of divinity, and its formula involved devotion to Mother Earth in return for the nourishment and shelter She provided. The Classical/Medieval Aeon of Osiris is considered to have been dominated by the Paternal Principle, and its formula was that of self-sacrifice and submission to the Father God. The modern Aeon of Horus is considered to be dominated by the Principle of the Child, the sovereign individual; and its formula is that of growth, in consciousness and love, toward self-realization.

According to Thelemic doctrine, the expression of Divine Law in the Aeon of Horus is "Do what thou wilt". This "Law of Thelema", as it is called, is not to be interpreted as a license to indulge every passing whim, but rather as the divine mandate to discover one's True Will or true purpose in life, and to accomplish it; leaving others to do the same in their own unique ways. The "acceptance" of the Law of Thelema is what defines a Thelemite; and the discovery and accomplishment of the True Will is the fundamental concern of all Thelemites. Achieving the "Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel" is considered an integral part of this process. The methods and practices to be employed in this process are numerous and varied; and are grouped together under the generalized term "Magick".

Not every Thelemite utilizes all the practices available, there is considerable room for each individual practitioner to choose practices which are suitable to his or her individual needs. Some of these practices are the same as, or similar to, the practices advocated by many of the great religions of the past and present; such as prayer, meditation, study of religious texts (those of Thelema and of other religions as well), chanting, symbolic and initiatory ritual, devotional exercises, self-discipline, etc. However, some of our practices have been traditionally associated with what has generally been known as "occultism"; i.e., astrology, divination, numerology, yoga, tantric alchemy, and discourse with "angels" or "spirits" are all taken by Thelemites as potentially effective means for obtaining spiritual insights into the nature of one's being and one's place in the universe; and for the fulfillment of such insights through harmonious, evolutionary works.

Thelema considers any action which is not directed toward the discovery and accomplishment of the True Will to be "black magic". This includes acts of interference with any other individual's lawful exercise of their right to discover and accomplish their own True Will. Thelemic doctrine holds that the disharmony and imbalance created by such actions results in a compensatory, equilibrating response from the universe; a doctrine similar to that of the Eastern conception of "Karma". Thelema has no direct parallel to the Judaeo-Christian concept of the devil or Satan; however, a pseudo-personification of confusion, distraction, illusion and egotistical ignorance is referred to by the name "Choronzon".

The Thelemic Calendar

The Thelemic calendar counts years from 1904 EV (the year Liber AL was received). Each Thelemic year starts on March 20th of the civil calendar, at (approximately) the northern-hemisphere Vernal Equinox.

Rather than simply giving the year count from 1904, the Thelemic calendar uses a two-tiered system. The "upper" level gives a count of twenty-two year periods since 1904; the "lower" level gives the years since the start of the current twenty-two year period. Both are zero-based, with nonzero numbers being represented as upper and lower case Roman numerals, respectively. So, for example, the civil year 1996 is (after March 20) Thelemic year IViv, because $1904 + (4 * 22) + 4$ equals 1996.

Some Thelemites assign the twenty-two years of each cycle to the twenty-two Trumps of the Tarot. The 22-year period numbers themselves are also assigned in this way. Hence, 1996 is doubly linked to Trump IV of the Tarot, the Emperor.

Within each year, dates and times are often expressed by the positions of the Sun and Moon in the Tropical zodiac. For example, May 12, 1996 EV at 6pm PST would be expressed as "IViv, Sol 22° Taurus, Luna 29° Pisces." This specifies the precise date and time to within about two hours.

When giving dates in the civil calendar, Thelemites will often append "e.v." This is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase "era vulgaris," or "common era."

Thelemic Observed Holy Days

The official holy days of Thelema are set forth in The Book of the Law, Ch. II, v. 36-41. The specific dates attributed to them are given in Crowley's commentaries, and are summarized below:

The Rituals of the Elements and Feasts of the Times are observed at the Equinoxes and Solstices.

The Feast for the First Night of the Prophet and His Bride is observed on August 12.

The Feast for the Three Days of the Writing of the Book of the Law is observed on April 8, 9 and 10, beginning at noon on each day.

The Feast for the Supreme Ritual (the Invocation of Horus) is observed on March 20, and represents the opening of the Thelemic new year.

The Feast for the Equinox of the Gods is held on the Vernal Equinox of each year to commemorate the founding of Thelema in 1904.

Three points of passage in the life of each Thelemite are observed. Birth is celebrated in a Feast for Life; puberty is celebrated in a Feast for Fire (for a boy), or a Feast for Water (for a girl); and the death of the individual is commemorated in a Greater Feast for Death.

Various anniversaries commemorating major events and figures in the history of Thelema and O.T.O. are also celebrated informally by some Thelemic groups.

Characteristic Customs

Nearly all Thelemites keep a record of their personal practices, and their progress therein, in a "Magical Diary". Most Thelemites also practice a particular form of prayer four times per day, which is specified in a book called Liber Resh vel Helios (included in reference 11, below). Thelemites often take mystic names or "magical mottoes" for themselves as a sign of commitment; and customarily greet each other with the phrase, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law"; to which the customary response is, "Love is the law, love under will". Sometimes these phrases are abbreviated by the simple statement of the number "ninety-three", which number signifies both "Will" and "Love" through a particular form of numerology of significance within Thelema.

Thelemic Organizations

Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) is incorporated in the State of California as a not-for-profit religious organization with tax exemption in California and the United States under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. O.T.O. currently operates in 17 countries around the world and has approximately 3000 active members. Within the broad context of Thelema, O.T.O. functions as a fraternal, initiatory, social, and educational organization of a religious nature.

O.T.O. includes a specifically liturgical arm which is called Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica (E.G.C.), the Gnostic Catholic Church, which was originally brought into relations with O.T.O. by Dr. Gerard Encausse (Papus) in 1908. The principal ritual of E.G.C. is called the Gnostic Mass (included in references 6, 9 and 11 below). Membership in E.G.C. is available through baptism and confirmation. Members of O.T.O. in good standing are eligible for clerical ordination in E.G.C. Members of II° and higher (or even I°, in some situations) are eligible for ordination as Deacon, and those who have reached K.E.W. are eligible for ordination as Priest or Priestess. E.G.C. also celebrates seasonal festivals, commemorations of life passage events and other religious functions. Many O.T.O. local bodies celebrate the Gnostic Mass on a regular basis, and in most locations, no formal affiliation is required to attend the Mass.

O.T.O. has long worked in close alliance with the A.:A.:, which first proclaimed the Law of Thelema to the world. The A.:A.: is a teaching and initiatory structure dedicated to the personal spiritual advancement of its individual members. Within A.:A.: all services are rendered free of charge, and no social activities are held. O.T.O. and A.:A.: have jointly issued the journal *The Equinox* since 1912 e.v., now entering its fourth volume. Although they are distinctly separate organizations, O.T.O. has historically assisted A.:A.: with practical matters that lie outside its primary mission, which is purely spiritual in nature. Aspirants to the A.:A.: may write to:

The Cancellarius of A.:A.:
c/o The Equinox
JAF Box 7666
New York, NY 10116
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Liber II

The Message of The Master Therion

"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law."

"There is no Law beyond Do what thou wilt."

"The word of the Law is THELEMA [in Greek]."

THELEMA [in Greek] - Thelema - means Will. The Key to this Message is this word - Will. The first obvious meaning of this Law is confirmed by antithesis; "The word of Sin is Restriction."

Again: "Thou hast no right but to do thy will. Do that and no other shall say nay. For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is every way perfect."

Take this carefully; it seems to imply a theory that if every man and every woman did his and her will - the true will - there would be no clashing. "Every man and every woman is a star," and each star moves in an appointed path without interference. There is plenty of room for all; it is only disorder that creates confusion.

From these considerations it should be clear that "Do what thou wilt" does not mean "Do what you like." It is the apotheosis of Freedom; but it is also the strictest possible bond.

Do what thou wilt - then do nothing else. Let nothing deflect thee from that austere and holy task. Liberty is absolute to do thy will; but seek to do any other thing whatever, and instantly obstacles must arise. Every act that is not in definite course of that one orbit is erratic, an hindrance. Will must not be two, but one.

Note further that this will is not only to be pure, that is, single, as explained above, but also "unassuaged of purpose." This strange phrase must give us pause. It may mean

that any purpose in the will would damp it; clearly the "lust of result" is a thing from which it must be delivered.

But the phrase may also be interpreted as if it read "with purpose unassuaged" - i.e., with tireless energy. The conception is, therefore, of an eternal motion, infinite and unalterable. It is Nirvana, only dynamic instead of static - and this comes to the same thing in the end.

The obvious practical task of the magician is then to discover what his will really is, so that he may do it in this manner, and he can best accomplish this by the practices of Liber Thisarb (see Equinox I(7), p. 105) or such others as may from one time to another be appointed.

Thou must (1) Find out what is thy Will, (2) Do that Will with (a) one-pointedness, (b) detachment, (c) peace. Then, and then only, art thou in harmony with the Movement of Things, thy will part of, and therefore equal to, the Will of God. And since the will is but the dynamic aspect of the self, and since two different selves could not possess identical wills; then, if thy will be God's will, T There is but one other word to explain. Elsewhere it is written - surely for our great comfort - "Love is the law, love under will."

This is to be taken as meaning that while Will is the Law, the nature of that Will is Love. But this Love is as it were a by-product of that Will; it does not contradict or supersede that Will; and if apparent contradictions should arise in any crisis, it is the Will that will guide us aright. Lo, while in The Book of the Law is much of Love, there is no word of Sentimentality. Hate itself is almost like Love! "As brothers fight ye!" All the manly races of the world understand this. The Love of Liber Legis is always bold, virile, even orgiastic. There is delicacy, but it is the delicacy of strength. Mighty and terrible and glorious as it is, however, it is but the pennon upon the sacred lance of Will, the damascened inscription upon the swords of the Knight-monks of Thelema.

Love is the law, love under will.

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The Toothpick and the Feather

by Frater Omega Bodhisattva

Once, hidden in the mountains of Tibet, there was a sacred monastery of healers called the Brouhaha. These were the famous Feather Healers of Tibet. These grand old Yogis would sit around the Temple all day long contemplating the Wholeness and Unity of All. Every once in a while the locals would bring in a villager who was sick.

Donning their elegant headpieces, and fabulous robes, each one would grab their special Healing Feather. Then, in solemn process, they would march into a special Healing Room and surround a table with the patient on it. They would form a ring around the table with their feathers pointing in. [The villagers would lay the patient on the table and run outside to wait. This freed the Feather Healers to operate in secrecy, and freed the villagers to speculate on Black Majik and Sorcery.] A low AUM would begin, and it would increase in volume, but slow down until each AUM lasted a full minute, and the room would begin to vibrate.

By some unknown or unseen method, one of the Feather Healers would feel a Calling to the patient. He would step forward and touch the patient on the chest. After a few minutes he would begin to use his feather to heal the patient.

One of the Feather Healers was named RA-DALPH. Poor Ra-Dalph was what the other Feather Healers called Slow of Mind Stream. He never was able to learn Sanskrit, or read the Ancient Vedas, nor could he write in Sacred Verse. But, his heart was good, and through a chain of loving Masters, had finally attained to the Grade of Feather Healer.

One night a great whisper swept through the Brouhaha Temple. The Dali Lama was sick and was on his way to their Temple. He would die before morning if he wasn't healed this night. Everyone dashed off in a panic to get their elegant headpieces and fabulous robes. Poor Ra-Dalph was confused because he had never heard of the Dali Lama. But he got caught up in all the rush to and fro, and found himself standing in the Circle of Feather Healers around the dying old man.

The AUM went up, and for no special reason Ra-Dalph felt the Calling so he stepped forward to the patient. There was a lull in the AUMing and the Chief of the Feather

Healers stepped forward to speak to Ra-Dalph.

"Sometimes," the Chief said, "it is very important that exactly the right person should do the healing."

"But I was called!" Ra-Dalph said. The Chief looked around at the other Feather Healers but they just bowed their heads. The Chief smile and bowed his head and went back to his place in the ring.

Ra-Dalph again felt the Calling and he stepped forward to the Dali Lama who was now very ill. Ra-Dalph went to use his Feather but discovered that he didn't have it. He had been in such a hurry that he must have forgotten it in his monk cell. In a panic he reached into the pocket of his sari and found a single used toothpick, left over from the evening meal. He looked around, but no one was really paying attention. He held up the toothpick over the belly of the Dali Lama and began to mark out the ancient signs that his teachers had passed onto him.

Soon, however, one of the monks saw Ra-Dalph using the toothpick and gasped. All of the AUMing ceased and the Chief stepped forward slightly in a panic.

But Ra-Dalph was done. His majik had been cast and the ancient formula was complete. Everyone held their breath and stared at Ra-Dalph. What had he done? How dare he? What would happen?

After a few minutes the Dali Lama rolled over and smiled. "Why thank you, dear Feather Healer, I am feeling so much better," but Ra-Dalph was gone. A signal went up and the Dali Lama was carried out with a Bodhi Cheer.

No one spoke to Ra-Dalph the whole evening, or deep into the next day. He simply sat in quiet meditation on the toothpick laying before him. What had he done? Surely the Dali Lama was dead and he would be killed, or sent out to live the squalid life of a lowly non-monk.

But he had no sooner thought this than the door to his monk cell opened up and the Dali Lama strolled in.

"Just heading out, dear monk, and I am feeling wondrous. I shall save the world again today!" And smiling he went out to leave. The Chief Monk stayed behind to have a word with Ra-Dalph. As soon as they were alone the Chief Monk threw himself to the ground and said: "O, Ra-Dalph, you are the greatest of Healers. You have exceeded us in All." And then he left.

That night there was a villager who was dying and he was brought in and placed on the table. All of the Feather Healers scuttled off for their garb. But this time Ra-Dalph took his time. When he finally arrived he saw that all the other monks were waiting for him before they started AUMing. A couple of them even smiled. Ra-Dalph also noticed that

every single monk had brought their toothpick to use that night.

Except for Ra-Dalph. This night he had remembered to bring his feather.

THE END

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The Fire of Azrael

An Equinox Ritual

by Soror Qadisha

Emerging refreshed from the depths of a sound and restful sleep, I ROSE just in time to catch the start of what was to be an incredible sunset. I quickly threw my implements into my backpack and prepared to head south for the evening's ritual. I was already charged up from many days of anticipation. I watched as the sun spun ribbons of amber light through the clouds on the horizon. To the north was a solid army of huge black clouds, threatening rain. I vibrated the name Azrael on the drive to M.'s house, feeling and moving with each letter's breath of energy. I had a wild feeling in me, surrounded by the brightly crashing air of the brilliant sunset, and the almost full moon to the east, and the approaching storm, I sensed a vibrant energy in the air, the powers of nature converging. I reveled in sympathy with my environment and felt the power within my chest grow as I continued to vibrate "Azrael." By the time I arrived at M.'s house, the winds were whipping the trees and telephone lines around with great force. I watched fascinated as the lid from a trash can rolled wheel-like down the center of the street past me. M. was excited too. We headed to our appointed spot outdoors. We climbed over the barbed wire fence and crawled through the huge concrete sewer pipe. As we emerged on the other side of the pipe, we felt as though we had stepped into another world.

We found our appointed spot and got right to work. I framed a large ritual circle with boulders as M. prepared the fuel for the Fire of Azrael. It was twilight and the clouds were closing in, pelting us with a few fat, cold drops of rain. The temperature and pressure had dropped very quickly as it often does when storms rise up from the north. I performed a preliminary banishing. M. followed with a powerful invocation around the circle, addressing the elements. As I sat in the center of the circle, I was filled with a sense of movement and stillness at the same time: I felt I was a whirling swastika or the hub of a gigantic wheel. We then began the invocation. We were very aware of each other and things were going smoothly. We had no set format for the ritual although we had set some parameters and identified some specific tools. We always left room for creative spontaneity. We sat in the middle of the circle together, facing north, and lit the Fire of Azrael incense that had been specially prepared. The aromatic smoke of sandalwood, cedar and cedar berries rose smoothly into the air. We clearly stated our will and purpose for the ritual before proceeding. Azrael is the Angel of Death, a psychopompos, Lord of Transformations. For me the purpose of the ritual was to change old outworn patterns of behavior, to slough off the old skin and step into the strength of a new way. M. and I performed spontaneous invocations to Azrael, passing our wands (fire/will) and then our quartz crystals (earth/manifestation) through the smoke of the incense we had

prepared. We pressed our torsos together and vibrated into each other's mouths
AAAAAAHHHHZZZZREEEEEAAAAALLLLL. I was lifted and transformed by the
tremendous energy informing my emotions and imagination. I felt the power of
transformation originating from within myself. Suddenly I realized that I already had the
tools to change myself in the manner I desired. Once again, I had found magick a
powerful tool for vitalizing my boundaries, renewing forgotten knowledge, rolling the ball
of shit into the sun. Our energy and the ritual peaked during the vibration, we collapsed
on the razor's edge of two distinct skies. To the south and west, the sky was clear calm
and the stars were piercing the atmosphere with their brilliant, liquid radiance. To the
north and east just overhead, the storm cast forth incredibly bright veins of flashing
lightning against black boiling clouds. It was a light show like I'd never seen, before or
since. And standing on that line where chaos meets tranquillity and the crack between
the worlds flashes open for a split second, we let Azrael spit us back out. We sat for
awhile longer and watched the flashing blue-white streamers throw strange patterns
against the mountains of clouds. Eventually, we grounded ourselves and closed circle.
We thanked the POWERS THAT BE and said farewell to Azrael, knowing that when
called, he would manifest again.

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by Sr. Nephthys

I've spent the last few weeks trying like hell to figure out why nothing in my life seemed
to be going right. I was clumsy, cranky, no one seemed to understand anything I was
talking about, nor could I understand what anyone else was talking about. Then a few
days ago, everything was fine. I was getting things done that hadn't been done in
weeks, communicating clearly with people I'd been almost arguing with, and just felt
generally better. Sound familiar? Congratulations! You're the next winner in the Mercury
Retrograde Sweepstakes. What the hell are you talking about, you say. Alternatively, if
you know what it is, sit back and enjoy the validation for your crazy behavior for the last
few weeks. I'll start slow. Mercury is the planet of communication, of any sort. Oral,
written, media, computerized, etc. Retrograde is a term describing the APPARENT
backward motion of a heavenly body from our perspective here on the Earth. No, the
planets don't actually move backwards, but because of differences in the relative
speeds of revolution about the Sun, to us, sometimes it looks as though a planet moves
backwards through the sky, West to East, instead of East to West.

Still with me? So what, you say? Well, retrograde motion for us is sort of like rubbing a
cat the wrong way: it's an unhappy thing sometimes. So, picture your communicative
abilities and everything that's connected to them suddenly operating in a manner
opposite to what they're used to. People argue due to misunderstandings, computers
crash for no apparent reason, messages get lost, things get broken and dropped, etc.,
etc. This potential for mishaps can range from the mildly annoying to the severely
debilitating, all depending on how heavy your Mercurian natal influence is. I'll explain.

Each planet 'rules' a sign, meaning that its power is expressed most easily in that sign.

By virtue of the connective nature of astrology, each planet also rules a house, since each house is correlated to a particular sign (12 of each). Our good friend Mercury rules the signs of Gemini and Virgo, so consequently also rules the 3rd and 6th Houses, communication and employment, respectively. Translation: if you have your Sun, Moon, Ascendant, or an abundance of planets in Gemini, Virgo, or the 3rd or 6th Houses, Mercury plays a very important part in how you go about your life. Just as important, if Mercury goes retrograde in a sign where your chart has a lot of emphasis, this will affect how those matters are handled as well.

I'll use myself as an example. I have a Gemini Ascendant and my Nadir in Virgo. The Ascendant governs daily activity: the manners in which you handle the usual things that cross your path on a daily basis. The Nadir represents privacy & the home, or the family. Since Mercury went Rx (abbr. for retrograde) on April 15 (Tax Day), anything in my life that fell under those two categories just went crazy. As I described above, I was cranky, clumsy, my house was unkempt, I found it difficult to think, write, or speak clearly, my computer kept crashing, and nothing at home seemed to go very well. Don't ever try to upgrade your computer while Mercury is Rx: it's a bad idea. As soon as Mercury went direct on May 8, everything's been fine. In addition, here's the nice side of a Mercury Rx.

It takes about three weeks for Mercury to stop moving backwards, and about another two to reach the same point in the sky it was located when it began moving backwards. This is important because that 2-week period while Mercury is regaining its ground represents a period of time where you'll be able to fix everything that wasn't going right while Mercury was Rx. Spats with coworkers will be resolved, that program you've been trying to load will work like magick, and all those tiny little things you've been needing to do but just couldn't get up the will to do all that stuff, it'll get done in no time.

Moreover, here's the better part: you can predict when these things will happen with almost clockwork-like regularity. Mercury has a regular pattern of retrogradation that varies each year by a month or so. Here are the times, roughly: December to February, April to June, and August to October. These represent average times of the year when Mercury will go Rx, not actual lengths of retrogradation. Mercury will always stay Rx for about three weeks, and always take about 2 weeks to return to its original turning point. Engagement-style astrology calendars are relatively cheap and hugely available at the end of each year, and serve as extremely useful tools when finding these Rx periods for Mercury, or any other planet.

What?! The others go Rx too!!! Yes, I'm afraid so. However, Rx periods are not necessarily to be dreaded. They represent periods of time when we should slow down and re-prioritize how we do our life business. When Mercury is Rx, it's time to put all those projects aside for a little while and do a little solitary work. Venus Rx is an invitation for lovers' spats or really good sex: it all depends on how you handle the energy. This is a time to mull over one's relationships and your role in them. When Mars is Rx, which just went direct recently as well, impulsive and aggressive tendencies can get blown out of proportion. So if you're a real go-get-em type, Mars retrograde

represents time when you should try to re-evaluate how you deal with anger and aggression. Jupiter rules growth and expansion: Jupiter Rx is a bad time to try to get a big project off the ground, especially if it relies on the cooperation of other people. Saturn is Jupiter's opposite, representing restriction and discipline: if Saturn is Rx, anything you have a need to control will probably not work the way you'd like it to. Saturn Rx can also instigate major life changes if it hits a sensitive chart spot or reflects natal aspects.

The outer planets will affect things on a more global basis when they go Rx. Uranus went Rx on May 12, and since it represents quick change, encompassing technology & computers, as well as social trends, these things may not flow smoothly for the next few months. Technology-related endeavors may hit snags related to readiness of the public & availability of products. People that spend much of their time socializing may find themselves bored more frequently. Neptune has just gone Rx as well, on May 1. Since Neptune represents dreams, awareness, and the unconscious, this could represent a time for people to look for guidance inwardly, rather than outwardly. This is a good time to do in depth spiritual work, but on a solitary basis and with the knowledge that work may progress slowly. Pluto is the granddaddy of Rx movers and shakers: if he goes Rx in a busy spot in your chart or in a place that activates natal aspects, be ready for some changes. For example, a transiting Pluto opposite or square a major chart fixture will set the stage for possibly life disruption. Even if it doesn't, the ride will most likely be unpredictable and a bit bumpy, but Pluto always has a bright light at the end of the tunnel.

The thing to remember with the planetary cycles of retrogradation is that the farther out a planet is, the slower it moves. And the slower a planet moves, the longer it will be retrograde. With the outer planets, retrograde changes manifest very slowly and gradually. With the inner planets, retrograde changes occur quickly and without warning sometimes. However, all retrograde periods are merely times when the Universe tells us to slow down in a particular area and regroup, reorganize the structure of how that particular thing is handled. Handled correctly, a retrograde period can actually be the incubator for wondrous accomplishments once the planet goes direct. Doing planetary magickal workings or designing planetary sigils are good ways to understand how the energy of the planets ebb and flow in one's life. Just knowing a planet is about to go retrograde and making plans accordingly can ease difficulties considerably.

Well, I know you're wondering, so here are the dates for the next two Mercury Rx periods this year. Good luck!

Mercury starts Rx Sunday 8-17-1997 2:42 pm CDT Virgo

Mercury starts Direct Tuesday 9-9-1997 8:33 pm CDT Virgo

Mercury starts Rx Sunday 12-7-1997 10:47am CST Capricorn

Mercury starts Direct Saturday 12-27-1997 5:39am CST Sagittarius

Note: Soror Phoenix is available for astrologocial consultation. See her web page at <http://www.io.com/~xephyr/center>

Back to the Table of Contents **THE NATURAL DREAMER**

by Sr. Oalimn

For me dreaming is like breathing: it comes very naturally. At times, my dreams are very insightful. But to some, dreaming can be a troublesome area of frustration and confusion. Some cannot recall their dreams from night to night, or others perhaps dream about events but they cannot understand the meaning. For example: What is the significance of a strange dream event like giving birth to a dog? I don't claim to have all the answers. But I do feel that there are certain processes that one can undertake in order begin to help achieve one's goals in dreaming.

The first step is to find out what your abilities are when it comes to dreaming. I like to call them stages of impressions. These will vary dramatically from person to person. The best way to determine where you are in these stages is to analyze yourself. For example: Are you the kind of person who can never remember your dreams? Can you not recall ever dreaming at all? Or do you recall your dreams but never have been able to achieve lucid dream state? Ask yourself what you have achieved in your dreams and make a list. Then make another list of things you would like to see yourself achieving in the dream state. For example:

What I have achieved in the dream state

- use of all the five senses
- knowledge that I am dreaming
- enhanced personal powers in the dream state
- a forecasting of future events (precognitive dreams)

What I would like to achieve while dreaming

- the ability to change the dream environment
- the ability to learn skills in my dreams to use in reality
- more context for my precognitive dreams

From my example you can put together your own list. Once this has been done, then it is possible to move on to the different techniques used to achieve your desired effect.

For some time now, I have wanted to write about dreams and how they effect our daily life. What was very important to me was to gather enough information from my own analysis of dreaming and speak to various individuals on the subject. I wanted to make sure that everything I might convey about dreaming was true and accurate to my own knowledge of the subject. I have not been quite satisfied with what is on the book shelves concerning this matter so I began my own exploratory process into dreamland.

I plan to continue with this dream series in the future issues of The Scarlet Letter. I urge you to please send any of your dream questions to the Scarlet Woman Lodge. I will respond to them and coordinate them with my article. Of course I will leave all correspondents anonymous. Let us begin our journey into the world of dreams. See you there!

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LEGEND

EBSM = Evil Black Sex Magician

KWOB = Kinky Whore of Babylon

BUSINESS

\$\$\$ INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY: EBSM seeks business partner for Elixir production and mass marketing.

EMPLOYMENT

Thaumaturgist seeks personal secretary. Type 60 wpm, light filing, AR/AP, client relations. Exact recitation of barbarous names from high-pressure magickal circle a must! Charlatans need not apply.

Secret Bondage OTO Splinter Groups seeks envelope pushers. Good pay, honest work.

Scarlet Woman needs Beast for Part-time Position- Must be in good physical condition, some lifting required, endurance a must. Some yoga experience preferred. Will Train. Four days per month guaranteed for the right person.

FOR SALE

For Sale. Goods and store of women and spices. No reasonable offer refused. Unreasonable offers considered. Call (418) 156-9393. Ask for Al.

For Sale - Goat (slightly used). Excellent for kiddie rides, bar mitzvahs, parades, and initiations.

On Sale Now! True Apostolic Succession. Send for your Apostolic starter kit today. Only \$23.99. P.O. Box 777, Big Fish, TX 78666.

PERSONALS

MEBSM seeks FEBSM for dining, romance, hiking, quiet evenings, fuzzy kitty cats and Black Mass (East Coast Satanic version preferred).

Nothin' butta Horn Dog seeks Thrice Great Horn Doggess for sniffin' and ruttin'. Arff!

KWOB seeks randy beast for bottoming and works of wickedness. Bare back riding, travel, and pleasure could be yours. Must have own livery equipment. 232-RIDE.

Experienced Initiatrix desires young, budding male magicians. Mutually beneficial.

Unorthodox ECG priestess seeks that special, romantic ECG priest for neon drive-thru transubstantiation. Dare to be different! Sheep need not apply. Send photo to P.O. Box 872, Lone Star, TX 78777

Hot, young mass team seeks same for swinging high jungle gym mass and double naked pagan twister. Write to 4=0, Box 16, Alembic, TX 78822.

Priest of the Sun seeks virgin pure without spot for high mass and possible mystical marriage. Ejaculation a plus. Send letter of qualifications to Priest of the Sun, 666 Sol St., Alma, NM 89222

MISCELLANEOUS

Divide, add, multiply and understand! MacGregor's Qabbalistic Pre-school now accepting applications for enrollment.

The Scarlet Classifieds were written by S.A.M.A.D.H.I. (Athena Ariagne, Dionysos Soter, Hortus Inclusus, & Maitreya) during a roadtrip to Mexico.

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Carter

Theurgy

by M. Ceries

She has the seething voice of wild magick

is she an angel?

she bears no halo

does she radiate measurably or penetrate the world with her melting opal eyes

feeling into a reach of forever with the silken touch of love or nothing?

statistics show her image to remain upon the retina for .166 seconds, on the average.

does her sweet pink tongue speak new of the dead and does she

furrow aside the atmosphere with gestures, tasting as she sings?

the throbbing air about her brightly crashes

is she an angel?

she is an angel on the hard white sheet of summer

when every second is jumping with blood and the highway heaves

in hot glass ripples like a bad mirror

on occasion as she will

her quiet spills

she is an angel.

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About the Cover Artist

This issue's cover artist is Sundari Lalita. Besides the beautiful collage pieces featured in this issue, Sundari Lalita also paints, creates block prints, and designs fabrics and costumes. This multi-talented Lodge member is also a computer programmer and a belly dance instructor.

Other Art and Artists in This Issue

Nuit - Sundari Lalita

Luna - Sundari Lalita

Astrological Septagram - Conscientia Clara

Skull - Conscientia Clara

The Face of the Night - Frederick Carter

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<http://www.scarletwoman.org/scarlett/art/onuit.jpg>

2 captures

27 Aug 2000 - 3 Feb 2003

Jul AUG Sep

27

1999 2000 2001

About this capture

<http://www.scarletwoman.org/scarlett/art/omoon.jpg>

6 captures

22 Nov 1999 - 18 Sep 2002

Sep OCT Nov

14

1999 2000 2001

About this capture

Volume IV, No. 3

Autumnal Equinox

September 22, 1997 e.v.

Sun in Libra, Moon in Gemini

Anno IVv

In this Issue:

The Great Work of Insect Metamorphosis

--by Fr. Y.V.

Plus:

From the Camel's Back
Tarot Rummy
The Natural Dreamer
Jewels from the Naked Brilliance
Thelemic Culture: Bridging the Generation Gap
Talx with DarqSyde

And fabulous Art!

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Volume IV, No. 4

Winter Solstice

December 21st, 1997 e.v.

Sun in Capricorn, Moon in Libra

Anno IVv

In this Issue:

Chichen Itza through the Eyes of a Magician

Thelemic Culture - Part II

Jewels from the Naked Brilliance

The Natural Dreamer

Your Last Chance by Criss Piss

Rites of Eleusis, Synchronicities...

Climbing and Trance-formation

Talx with DarqSyde

Magick of the Urpflanze

Art and Artists

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However, no part of this journal may be reproduced without the written permission of the Editor and the author and/or artist. The Great Work of Insect Metamorphosis

by Frater Y.V.

"Look to the ant, thou sluggard, and be wise."

Kingdom Animalia, Phylum Arthropoda, Subphylum Mandibulata, Class Insecta. Members of this most ancient and primitive race have always been familiar to us; as competitors, combatants, curiosities, and occasionally, co-conspirators. From the Luna Moth to the Cockroach, we regard them with a mixture of repulsion and fascination. The repulsion is perhaps a result of our often competitive roles, the fascination a result of their strange beauty; but in addition, there seems to be something familiar about them. Perhaps they stir ancient memories, causing them to rise from genetic history into our subconscious minds; or perhaps we project our own deep reflections upon them like Rorschach Blots -- but then who designed the "random" swirls of the Rorschach Blot if not She who designed us?

Each species of insect belongs to an Order. There is the Order of the Straight Wings (Orthoptera) which plagued Egypt, the Order of the Sheathed Wings (Coleoptera) ruled by Khephra, the Order of the Dual Wings (Diptera) ruled by Beelzebub, the Order of the Wedded Wings (Hymenoptera) with its complex hierarchies, and its honeybees ruled by Venus, the Order of the Scaled Wings (Lepidoptera) ruled by Chuang Tzu, and many others, each with its own regalia, rites, and modes of recognition.

Like us, insects undergo embryonic as well as post-embryonic development. Unlike most of us, the post-embryonic development of most insects involves rather drastic changes in appearance and occurs in distinct stages. This post-embryonic development is known as metamorphosis. There are several types of insect metamorphosis, we will focus on "complete" metamorphosis, the system promulgated by the Order of the Scaled Wings (butterflies and moths) and certain others. In complete metamorphosis, the insect undergoes 4 stages: egg, Larva, Pupa and Adult. We will begin our examination with the Larval stage.

The Larva

Larva is a Latin word meaning "ghost." The Larval or Instar stage may be regarded as

the "student," "neophyte" or "Man of Earth" grade. The task of the Larva is to get bigger; to consume enough nourishment to progress to the next stage, or to serve as a juicy morsel for a predator. The Larva is usually blind, has very restricted mobility, and is unconcerned with anything it is not directly touching.

The Pupa

Pupa is a Latin word meaning "doll" or "puppet." The task of the Pupa is to refrain from activity (enter into a Magical Retirement) while Transformation takes place. The Pupal stage corresponds to the "portal" or "K.E.W.," the bridge between the Man of Earth and the Lover.

The Transformation to Adult, or Imago, which takes place within the Pupal case occurs as follows. The Instar contains seed cells within its body, called Imaginal Buds. During the Pupation period, the imaginal buds secrete chemicals which lyse or destroy the surrounding cells. Meanwhile, the buds themselves grow and divide to replace the destroyed cells. Eventually, all the cells of the Instar are destroyed and replaced by cells of the Imago. This process, the Instar transforming itself into the Imago, is referred to as Imagination.

The Adult

The Adult insect or Imago, corresponding to the Adept or Grade of Lover, emerges from the Pupal case (pastos or tomb), expands its wings by pumping fluid into them, and flies away to find a mate or engage in other social activities. In addition to the power of flight, the Imago has other "miraculous" abilities, in part due to its well developed sensory organs. Bees can see ultraviolet light, ants can communicate complex messages via the sense of smell, and the males of some species of moths can sense a female over a mile away. As most of us know, many insects also have the power of invisibility; most insects are quite familiar with the virtues of herbs and plants, and some insects are definitely capable of causing illness in our neighbor's cattle. It is alleged that some insects can predict the weather, but it is not known whether they can predict the future.

Through the process of sexual reproduction, the Imago may achieve "genetic samadhi" by unifying its genetic will with a separate genetic will, and then dying. Both are simultaneously preserved and destroyed through the formula of Tetragrammaton. That is, genetic will "I" unites with genetic will "H." The Union of genetic wills "V" results in the genetic will "H2," which is neither "I" nor "H" but contains both in their entirety.

The Egg

The apparent loss of the individuality through combination and death is analogous to crossing the Abyss (Note - Da'ath = Knowledge = Gnosis = Union). The individual is dead and gone, yet there is that which remains - in combined form as the Child; which is in this case the egg.

The Imago (Lover) is therefore concerned with the evolution of the species by its choice whether or not to reproduce, whereas the Instar (Man of Earth) is concerned with its own personal evolution. What is the formula of the Lover? Union. Love (13) is Union (13).

The egg in this system therefore corresponds to the grade of Hermit, the Master, the dweller in the City of the Pyramids (have you ever seen a cluster of moth or ladybug eggs?) withdrawn from society, consciousness and duality. The task of the Master in the City of the Pyramids (Binah), is to wait, for the refining fire to burn it into a white ash or pure will (Chokhmah), which is further reduced to a grain of dust (Kether) which is carried either into nothingness (the dissolution, Nirvana) or into the Kingdom (as a Boddhisattva). The egg either dies or hatches. If it hatches a new cycle begins, and the Great Spinner of the Web of the Universe will smile and ask,

"Whom have you there?"

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FROM THE CAMEL'S BACK

by Sr. Baphometis Continuity
Lodge Master

In the end, about 156 people attended the first O.T.O National Conference, give a few, take a few. This represented very close to the 10% of initiate members in the USA that the Electoral College and the promoters had optimistically hoped/predicted would come. For anyone who doesn't know, the OTO NatCon was held in Akron, Ohio, sponsored by Black Sun Lodge, on Aug 15 - 17, 1997 e.v. It took place in a Hilton Hotel tucked into a sea of shopping malls. The Hilton and its little buddy, the Days Inn next door, became our island for the weekend, which we proceeded to make a village. Initiates came from around the country to be there; predictably, attendance percentages were proportionately higher for bodies located closer to Ohio. Nonetheless, it felt like a good representative sampling. The people who came made a significant material effort to do so. They really wanted to be there, and it showed.

A convocation of Thelemites is an interesting thing. There isn't really a look (although perusing the jewelry will often provide the first clue), but there is an unmistakable vibe, especially as we start to spot each other. Friday afternoon began with some furtive 93's in the parking lot, which grew more enthusiastic as folks realized the trick worked. The first scheduled event was the Gnostic Mass, which took place at a community center a few blocks away. That was, I think, when people got the idea of what we were in for over the weekend. Everybody brought such a big charge of energy. For many, this was the first opportunity to put faces on the names that they'd been hearing forever or the folks they'd been corresponding with for years. And so, the introductions began. By the time we got to The Banquet of Jupiter, uh, the formal banquet, people were primed. And Gods, did we look beautiful. It was such a rush to walk into that ballroom and scan across the lovely mass of energy form in fine apparel. The ritual was good, the food was

excellent, and the company sublime - which pretty much set the tone for the rest of the weekend. The most astounding thing about the Con for me was the social aspect. It was kind of a revelation to see who our sisters and brothers actually are.

Like most Cons, the schedule was tight. There wasn't a lot of breathing space. That was fine, as it kept things intense. Personally, I like to meet people while in the midst of participating in some shared activity, as opposed to a purely social matrix. I was not disappointed. There were presentations, rituals, and lectures of the complex and detailed variety. An intellectual jamarama. It was impossible to fully tackle any subject in the hour allotted, simply because there were so many people with so many ideas. It was psychically exhausting, and exhilarating as well. The only break in the scheduled activities was on Saturday night - and by then almost everyone had a full dance card. The Hilton took on an unearthly glow.

There were Thelemites singing karaoke in the hotel bar, (a really scary vision, I know, but I'm just reporting the facts here) and Thelemites swimming in the pool, and Thelemites sitting in hotel rooms debating kabala, and drinking fine wine, and Thelemites reading poetry, and reportedly there were Thelemites bouncing on their beds exchanging kundalini shots with their new favorite sex toy, the vibrating Mr. Potato Head. There were secret rituals and exchanged confidences. Plots were hatched and plans were made, late into the night. A great amount of coffee was consumed. People decided that there would be plenty of time for sleep later. In short, the mindmeld was successful.

Sunday included a 5 hour slot set aside for the discussion of the Minerval through III* initiation ceremonies. It turned out to be enough time to discuss 1 and 1/2 rituals, only because we hurried. It became clear that the 100 initiators in the room had strong, varying opinions on every point of every ritual. We needed an additional day, and we didn't have it. Less than 48 hours after we convened, it was over. It seems like an eye blink; a long dream that took place in a couple seconds of snatched dozing. I was driving east feeling like I left something behind. I wanted to go camping for a week at the seashore - with the whole tribe. I went to the NatCon without much of a sense of expectation - I don't like the conference motif, in general. I knew it would be interesting, but it turned out to be a moving and vital experience, providing a welcome infusion of enthusiasm and energy. It was entirely worth it to travel to Akron in the middle of the summer. I'd do it again in a heartbeat, because of the perspective lent. If you missed it, I strongly suggest you save up for next time.

The big question now is when will the next one be? The folks from Cleveland, Bloomington and Chicago worked their collective butts off to make this one a success. Who will take the next bite? Maybe some nice unsuspecting conference center on the ocean would be nice... some place where we could make a bit more noise, and enjoy the outdoors, and make love and music under the stars... Maybe at the O.T.O. 100 year anniversary (in '02) we can have an International Conference...

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TAROT RUMMY

by Frater 9 Roots

This two-handed version of rummy using tarot attributions makes for a fun way to learn qabalistic correspondences, as well as a potentially vicious contest.

The Deck

A 78-card deck is required, with five suits. Four of the suits must have 14 cards, numbered ace through ten with four face or "court" cards. The fifth suit must have 22 cards, numbered zero through XXI. Traditional tarot decks such as the Crowley/Harris and Rider/Waite decks or other popular tarot packs can be used, but they often pose a problem in identifying cards held in the hand. The commercially available "Alice In Wonderland" tarot deck gives card values in opposite corners, like traditional playing cards.

Another alternative is to build a pack out of two identical poker decks. Mark Jacks (Princes) from one deck as Princesses and add them to the other deck to create the four elemental suits. Clubs are wands, hearts are cups, spades are swords, and diamonds are disks. For trumps, cannibalize the remaining cards. I made the four Jokers (two from each deck) into the Fool (0), the Magician (I), the Hermit (IX), and the Hanged Man (XII). I took the four queens as the Priestess (II), Empress (III), Adjustment (VIII), and Star (XVII). The Kings were the Emperor (IV), Hierophant (V), Devil (XV), and Aeon (XXI). I finally used the five through ten of clubs for the Sun (XIX), Lovers (VI), Chariot (VII), Lust (XI), Moon (XVIII), and Wheel (X) cards, respectively.

Play

One player deals ten cards each to himself and the other player. A twenty-first card (the "upcard") is turned face-up and forms the first card of the discard pile. The other player begins by adding either the upcard or the unrevealed top card of the deck to his hand, and then discarding one card. Play returns to the dealer, who chooses from the discard or the deck, and then discards. Play continues, alternating. The object is to form "melds" in one's hand: series of 3 or more cards according to any of several rules.

Melds

Not all meld types must be used in any given game. For ease of play, at least the Serpent, Sword, and Sphere melds should be permitted. Other types should be added as agreed.

Serpent Meld: Three or more consecutively numbered trumps may be melded.

Sword Meld: Three or more consecutively numbered cards in the same suit may be melded, with the

sequence being Ace through Ten, Princess, Prince/Jack, Queen, King/Knight.

Sphere Meld: Three or more small cards or court cards (not trumps!) of the same value may be melded.

Path Meld: Two numbered small cards of the same suit may be melded with the addition of the trump attributed to the path which joins their spheres, according to the qabalistic Tree. E.G. 8 of Cups à the Devil à 6 of Cups. Three cards of the same suit may be joined by two trumps for a five-card meld, etc.

Mother Meld: The three elemental trumps, i.e. the Fool, the Hanged Man, and the Aeon, may be melded.

Double Meld: Three or more planetary trumps may be melded. The Magician, the High Priestess, the Empress, the Wheel of Fortune, the Tower, the Sun, and the Universe are all the planetary trumps.

Single Meld : Three or more consecutive zodiacal trumps may be melded. The sequence is the Emperor, the Hierophant, the Lovers, the Chariot, Lust, the Hermit, Adjustment, Death, Temperance, the Devil, the Star, and the Moon. The Emperor follows the Moon in cyclical sequence. (Some may wish to change this sequence in accord with AL I:57 and Crowley's Book of Thoth.)

Ending the Hand

Either player may signify the end of the hand on any play by discarding face-down (the "call"). If, after his Discard, all of the cards in his hand are melded, he is awarded 22 points plus the total value of the unmelded cards in his opponent's hand. If the caller's hand still contains unmelded cards, he places his melds on the table. His opponent may then play any unmelded cards into the caller's melds. Then the value of the caller's unmelded cards is deducted from the value of the opponent's remaining unmelded cards. If the result is positive, the points are awarded to the caller. If the result is negative, the caller has been undercut, and his opponent receives 22 points plus the difference in the unmelded cards.

Individual cards are scored as follows:

Ace through ten of each suit (not trumps!) are counted at their numbered values.

Court cards are worth 10 points each.

Elemental trumps (see "Mother melds") are worth 3 points apiece.

Planetary trumps (see "Double Melds") are worth 7 points apiece.

Zodiacal trumps (see "Single Melds") are worth 12 points apiece.

It is good to establish a convention requiring that calls be made only when the caller's unmelded cards are below a certain point limit, such as ten or twelve.

Winning the Game

The winner deals the next hand. Scoring of hands is cumulative, and the game ends when the leading score exceeds an agreed limit. 156 makes for a comfortably brief game.

Optional Rules to Make It Uglier

Identification: The caller must be able to identify all the cards in each of his melds according to their Correspondences in a column of 777 chosen by his opponent.

(Choice should be limited to a list of columns agreed upon beforehand.) If the caller cannot make the identifications, the hand is left unscored, and the opponent deals the next one.

Wild Cards: Very ugly. Don't do it, if you know what's good for you.

Dealer's Choice: The dealer gets to set rules on melds, call limits, identification, and /or wild cards before dealing the hand.

Upcard's choice: The upcard determines rules on melds, call limits, identification, and /or wild cards for the hand. For example, the call limit may be set at the scoring value of the upcard.

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THE NATURAL DREAMER

Part II: Dreaming in Color

by Sr. Oalimn

Gaia by Sundari Lalita

Many people have the ability to dream in color and it would probably seem unnatural for them to dream in any other way. But there are others who only dream in black and white. I cannot claim to know the scientific facts that determine why people dream in color versus black and white, but I can give some advice and techniques that one can use to help achieve the result of dreaming in color.

First, it is important to remember that the techniques I will be giving you to use take patience and discipline. You will need to have a journal and I recommend keeping it on the night stand with a pen. One method that I and many others have used to implement color in the dream is daydreaming. As you begin, it is important to be in a space that you are comfortable with. I personally find it easy to daydream anywhere. I recommend using your intuition to determine what feels right to you. After you have prepared your space, it is time to regulate your breathing so that the air flows freely and is not forced. Meditating or breathing exercises are good to start with. You are now finally relaxed. Next it is time to set the mind in motion. While you are daydreaming, pick out certain objects in your daydream and think of the color. For example dream of a blue ocean or green pastures. Keep up this exercise for five minutes. It is important to continue your daydreaming practice for at least seven days. Remember to write down any changes that might occur in your dreams at night.

The next method that can be helpful for dreaming in color is staring at bright colors or pictures right before you go to bed. If you are thinking about this before you go to sleep it is very likely that you will dream about it. Something that I do quite often before sleeping is to tell myself out loud what I wish to dream about that evening. For example, "I will dream in color tonight!" You can keep using this mantra every night before you go to bed.

Herbal concoctions as have been used traditionally by many cultures. The usage of such herbs to stimulate the mind and calm the soul for a night of adventure in dreamland can be helpful in learning to dream in color. I caution you to research on your own the proper way to dispense these herbs. Anyone who is pregnant, nursing , diabetic or has any other major illnesses, should use extreme caution with any herbs.

Sage or Red Sage can be used as a tonic tea and should not be taken for more than a week. Sage can get rid of bad dreams or nightmares. But it can also increase memory and mental abilities. Valerian Root is used to raise and commune with spirits. It should not be boiled. Blessed Thistle can be put in a bath. This calms and rejuvenates the mind so that dreaming may come easier. Catnip tea made with Chamomile, Spearmint, and Lemon Balm relaxes the nerves and eases tension out of the body. This can be good for achieving prophetic type dreams. Gotu Kola or Indian Pennywort can be used to stimulate circulation to the brain and increase mental activity. These methods can be used to aide us in our work in the dream world. It is wise to always use caution and research everything before you use any of these herbal methods. A Brother told me that he uses Mugwort mixed with Lavender and stuffs it into a small cotton pillow and places it near his head before going to sleep. He is very pleased with the results in enhancing his ability to dream in color.

I encourage those of you who are journeying on this path to write to me with any questions that you may have in care of the Scarlet Woman Lodge. I am always happy to share my knowledge and experiences with you. I will continue with Part Three in the next issue. For now I bid you all sweet dreams.

Back to the Table of ContentsJewels from the Naked Brilliance

Cycles Within Cycles

by Nephthys

Astrological Septagram

I have been noticing for the last few months that many of my friends have either just completed or are going to begin their Saturn return. "Whazzat?" asks anyone under the age of 30. Some people think it's their worst nightmare. Some people think it's their best hope. Both can be true.

Saturn is the Lord of Discipline. He cut off his father Uranus' genitals and flung them into the sea. The waters were fertilized, and Aphrodite sprang from the foam. This simple story is very reflective of the Saturn return. Something that seems very valuable must be sacrificed in order for something beautiful to be born. Saturn was not just severing his father's genitals: he was removing him from his entrenched place of power, dispersing his fertility and power to other things and relegating him to his place in Heaven where he belonged. Likewise in the Saturn return, one must sever one's self from what is unnecessary so that energy can be released and utilized for something better, no matter how painful the process. Uranus is thus known as the Father of the Heavens, his wife Gaia the Earth.

Those who follow Egyptian mythology will know these archetypes as Nuit and Geb.

Saturn can be seen as a duality of Ra and Thoth by following Plutarch's version of the birth of Nuit's children. In its rigid, unchanging form, Saturn is Ra: he sealed up his Mother's womb so that Horus could not be born, thinking he could rule forever and evade prophecy. However, Thoth played a trick on him and added 5 days to the end of the calendar (representing the symbolic difference between a calendar year and a lunar year), henceforth allowing Nuit's other children, Osiris, Isis, Horus, Set, and Nephthys to be born since Ra was not paying attention. A Saturn return can be very much like this. Change may be resisted and self-deception attempted despite knowing full well what must occur or be done. But sooner or later, the true nature of the situation must be shown allowing growth to occur.

The Lunar influence of a Saturn return is not an accident. Just prior to one's Saturn return, which occurs around age 29 1/2, one experiences their Progressed Lunar Return. Progressions sort of stretch time: this one equates one day of life to one year of life; i.e. the first day you were alive reflects what your first year of life was like, and so on. 29 1/2 days or so after you were born, you experienced your first real Lunar return. Consequently, 29 1/2 years or so after you were born, you experience your first progressed Lunar return. Since progressions move so slowly, their impact is much greater and more long lasting than a normal transit. The progressed Lunar return prepares you emotionally for the coming Saturn return. The Moon has traveled through each sign of the Zodiac, spending approximately 2 1/2 years in each sign. When it comes back, you are able to integrate all of the emotional information that you have been collecting for the last 28 or so years into a cohesive working whole. Emotional issues that were confusing before suddenly become clear. You will need this clarity in the next couple of years.

This scenario is again reflective of the duality of Ra and Thoth, or the Sun and the Moon in classical Egyptian mythology. Ra, the Sun or Saturn, is blinded by his power and refuses to relinquish, though he knows very well that it has been foreseen that Horus will overtake his power eventually. Thoth, the Moon, is a reflection of Ra. In his pale silvery light he is able to see what Ra will not, and subsequently trick his brother into doing what must be done: the true face of Saturn. The Moon offers one the perspective one needs in order to see through some of the rigidity Saturn displays, especially when its power is threatened.

As I stated before, Saturn is the Lord of Discipline. Just as the Moon has been busy collecting emotional information for the last 29 years, so has Saturn been collecting constructive information about what works in one's life and what doesn't. When Saturn reaches its natal point in one's chart, that same completeness that the Moon enabled with one's emotions is triggered in one's sense of order and discipline. This knowledge in mind, Saturn begins getting rid of anything it doesn't need. If one had not already been through the progressed Lunar return, the emotional upheaval a Saturn return would create would be immense, far more so than it already is.

Why are Saturn returns usually traumatic? Most people don't like change: they like things to stay the way they are. If they do want change, they want it to manifest how

they see fit. Saturn returns take some of the control away from a person, and since we're not really very willing to trust that everything's going to be okay, we resist what's happening. What is affected in life depends on what sign and house Saturn resides in the chart. For example, a 1st House Saturn return in Pisces would most likely yield a final awareness about one's self, one's ego after an initial period of deception. A 7th House Saturn return in Pisces would be about that person's relationships. These same House placements, but occurring in, say, Aries, would be very different. The primary focus would be on initiative and action: the lesson would be patience.

All of the planets have a return cycle, though most of us won't live to experience the outer three, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. A few may live to see their first and only Uranus return, occurring around age 84. Being that Uranus is about sudden, unexpected, and sometimes drastic change, it is no surprise that many people have their Greater Feasts in their mid 80s. With orbital periods of 165 and 256 years for Neptune and Pluto, respectively, Humans will not experience these returns unless the dreams of science fiction books come true (but anything's possible, isn't it?)

The return we are most familiar with is the Solar Return, more commonly known as your birthday, or Lesser Feast. The exact point of one's Solar Return will not occur exactly on one's birthday usually, but within a day or two of it. This is the time to recharge your very essence, "the flame that burns in every heart of man and in the core of every star." We generally feel in control and comfortable around our birthday. New ideas for the coming year arise, plans are made. A cleaning of the slate, so to speak.

Within a couple of months before or behind your Solar Return, you'll get a Mercury as well as a Venus return (not necessarily at the same time). Our communication skills are tiptop when Mercury's in our natal sign. We speak easily and with confidence. Venus makes us lovely and charming. We always look more attractive to others when Venus is in our natal sign. Our personal skills are refined and we have an eye for what is beautiful and pleasing to us. The first Mercury return is generally around when a baby will start talking and walking. The first Venus return marks the beginning of the baby's sense of like and dislike, as well as how to change their behavior to get what they want.

Every parent on Earth knows the Mars return: it's known as the Terrible Twos. "No!!! I won't do it!" This is the first assertion of the child's aggressive behavior, the knowledge that Mars has the power to get what Venus wants. The refusals to behave in appropriate ways, go to bed when they're supposed to, eat what's in front of them, these are all exertions of the child's first inkling that it has its own power. As with any Arian or Martian energy, moderation and patience are learned with each successive Mars return, which occur about every 2 years 2 months. At age 14 or 15, we experience our first Solar Martian return: that is, both the Sun and Mars have returned to their natal location simultaneously for the first time since birth. This combined aggressive and individual energy marks the beginning of the rebellious period of a teenager's life. Up until now, they've just had the realization that they can use their power as an external source: that is, they do not typically use it to separate themselves from their parents or others. When the Solar Martian return occurs, they are hit with the realization that they are a unique

and complete entity unto themselves. This results in the typical adolescent behavior of disobeying authority and generally following what they deem to be their Wills, now that they have the power to exert it.

This is different from the social individuality of the Jupiter return, which occurs at age 12 and marks the beginning of puberty. Children still respect their parents and generally do as they say, but this is when they ask their parents to pick them up from school a block away so they are not seen by their friends. They will insist upon picking out their own clothes and personal decorations, and will generally disapprove of whatever style their parents exhibit. It is unacceptable to be seen as a child in a social context once the first Jupiter return has occurred. This is amplified with the Solar Martian return: it is no longer acceptable to be seen as a child, period. The second Jupiter return marks the beginning of a person's adult social life. Old friends that were seen throughout high school and college may fall by the wayside. New ones are made through the new social circles that are formed by expanding one's horizons. Each Jupiter return causes a person to re-evaluate their place in the world in a social context, and they occur every 12 years.

The other kind of return we experience regularly is the Lunar return, which happens approximately every 29 days. The Moon rules our bodies and emotions. We may be more conscious of those things when the Moon is in our sign. Since the Moon moves so rapidly, it is probably not something that most of us notice much unless we're actually paying attention. Nor will we particularly notice the exact time that Luna returns to her natal position, unless that's a busy spot in our chart. This is also why the Moon is about comfort: it is the most comfortable energy that we possess, the easiest to integrate into our daily lives because the cycle revolves so often. We may not realize its full potentiality until the Progressed Lunar Return, but the Moon nonetheless represents the part of ourselves that we probably know best.

Paying attention to the Moon is especially beneficial to women. I refuse to believe it is biological coincidence that most women's menstrual cycles are around 28 or 29 days long, the length of a Lunar cycle. Scientific facts like the match in salinity and minerals between amniotic fluid and the ocean, whose tides rise and fall in time with the Moon, compound this belief for me. Granted, some women have longer and shorter cycles, but I am firmly convinced that further study of such women's charts would yield a pattern that is dependent upon the Moon. Following the Moon's passage while noting emotional and bodily changes can help regulate an erratic cycle because the Moon rules body memory as well. Habits. The mind is connected to the body. Paying attention to this energy also offers a woman an alternative method of determining fertility, provided their cycle is very regular.

I believe this same principle can be applied to the male physique as well. It's fairly well accepted that men have a regular cycle that they go through just like women do: the nature and mechanism of that cycle is still under debate. I believe it is emotional in nature, just as it is in women, but it manifests more internally than it does for women. I have noticed some men will have regular changes in their appetite or body weight. Their

bodily desires that give them comfort will change throughout the month as the Moon revolves.

Everyone feels a little more secure when the Moon is in their sign. Each Lunar return sets the emotional mood for the next cycle, depending on what aspects are in the sky at the time of the return. This is why an exactly repeated cycle is not observed: the same basic energies may flow, but down different paths. Likewise, the Solar return sets the expressive mood of a person for the next year. Their basic energy remains the same, but they may express it in a slightly different manner.

Paying attention to these cycles within cycles helps all of us understand ourselves a little bit better, both as individuals and as entities functioning within a greater whole. Our personal cycles, from the Moon out to Saturn, represent how we function against the slower backdrop of the outer planets. Seeing when these returns will happen can help us prepare for that shift in energy. Each return sheds unnecessary energy for that planet: its energy is re-evaluated. By knowing beforehand when our psyche will require us to do some housecleaning, we can get an early start by asking ourselves those questions before the Universe demands the answers. Ask the Moon how it wants to feel differently. Ask the Sun how it wants to express itself differently. Ask Mercury how it can better communicate its ideas. Ask Venus how it can get the things that make it feel good. Ask Mars what's pissing it off and how to fix it. Ask Jupiter what it needs to learn. Ask Saturn what it needs for order and structure. Learning to address these different aspects of the soul is a key to integrating them into a working individual more than capable of achieving the Great Work.

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THELEMIC CULTURE:
Bridging the Generation Gap

by Soror Sulis

Child of the Sun by Sulis

Christmas was always a time of wonder in my childhood. Boxes were hauled down from the attic, lights were untangled and tested, advent calendars were put on the walls. The smell of cookies filled the air and we warbled "O Du Froliche" along with the Bad Toltz Boy's Choir. As each ornament was carefully unwrapped and hung on the tree, one of my siblings would call out, "Oh, that's my favorite one!". We celebrated, like good German Catholics, on Christmas Eve, with candlelight reflecting off the tinsel as we opened the presents.

Now I am a mother, and a Thelemite, and I run a sort of schizophrenic interior dialogue

each year; remembering the joy of Christmas, and resenting like hell that my kids are singing "O Little Town of Bethlehem " for Christmas pageants in school. I grumble, but what's a mother to do?

I tried to explain to my five-year-old daughter that we were not Christians, and this was not our holy day. She regarded me suspiciously; the thought forming that maybe this meant no tree, no presents. I admit that it did not sound very convincing, even to myself, and there was no way she was buying it. She listened patiently, then asked what Thelemites do at Christmas. I hemmed and hawed and admitted that we did whatever it was our Will to do. "Then, at Christmas-time, I am a Christian..." she announced, "because they get presents".

"Well, what about the Solstice?" asked my evil scientist son, Sigma. "It is a solar holiday, and Ra Hoor Kuit is a sun god. ..." I saw the glint in his eye as he continued "...and it comes earlier than Christmas!" He nudged his sister, whispered in her ear and they began singing It's Beginning to Look a lot like Solstice.

I reluctantly agreed, still not convinced, but not seeing any other way around it. I felt uncomfortable simply substituting one holiday for another. True, many aspects of Solstice celebration were incorporated into Christmas, and borrowing it back wasn't a big deal. But there was still something itching in the back of my head. I was looking for a tradition. A Thelemic one.

Of course, Thelemites will do whatever they will for any reason at any time. But the kids were longing for that sense of identity that comes when a community does the same thing at the same time. They want to know what it means to be a Thelemite. Mostly, to them, it means that we do a lot of weird, inexplicable things that nobody else's family does. They see that we do initiations and the Mass, and the Rites, but to them it comes down to beanie weenies for dinner 'cause mom's rushing about, chasing misplaced robes and polishing swords. Although they rarely and peripherally participate in Oasis events our children are a big part of our community. A quick count showed that if one includes the children of members, they would represent about 20% of the Oasis. So what are we doing for them; what should we be doing for them, as a community?

Parents are a child's main initiators into the mysteries of life. This is followed closely behind by schools, which initiate them into a social sphere and church, with initiation into the spiritual. In both of the latter, the parents act as a filter to the child's perception; assisting them to interpret the data they receive from other sources, sort of a Hitchhiker's Guide for kids.

How do we explain "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law" to a child? Ever consider how frightening Chapter 3 can be to a youngster? My son had some legitimate and serious questions about verse 24 in particular. Try not being a cop to that! And what are we doing in the Mass? I don't think little Johnny-down-the-street's mother would understand at all that they were "just doing the Mass", if she finds them in the garage, parting the veil! This is one of the more crucial parts in Thelemic parenting, because

after all, we're sex magicians, and a rollicking, rousing bunch of them at that! How do we do what we do and keep it sane and healthy for the kids?

One way we have approached this is to state the nature of our get-togethers before hand, so attendees may gauge the speed limit. The attitudes we developed, in our early years as a camp, are being tempered as we add a more diverse population to our community. Through birth, association, and initiation, we welcome new members into our group. The real issue of how different people approach Thelema at different stages of their life have to be considered. What is appropriate for one at a certain time of life, may not be the same for someone else at a different stage. Know your own speed limit, and be courteous to others on the road.

The next step is for us, as a community, to look around and start to come up with a definition of this grand and wonderful social experiment that our kids can use. Thelema in fruity, nutritious nuggets! I think most of us cringe with the thought of anything that resembles Sunday school, but consider this: the initiatory experience is re-enactment of a myth designed to impart a certain consciousness at a certain time. This can be at a time of life, such as the onset of puberty or a time of year, i.e. the vernal equinox. Holy days. Holidays. Days that are out of the realm of the ordinary to offer a door of perception and the wisdom of the season. What insights to their path as young Thelemites can we give to help them do battle in the cause of freedom in accordance with the Book of the Law?

Big questions.

Big answers to follow!

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Eye by Conscientia Clara
Talx
with
DarqSyde
Eye by Conscientia Clara
Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.
Little Sister,

Your story intrigues me; you continue to be my "...Teacher is there." (This even tho' I am your escort.) Your orgasm - (w/out physical manipulation) during a relaxed yet intense fantasy & Inner-Ji blast of having your partner chained to a wall in front of you - is but a sign-post along your Going.

My spirit wills to occupy a particular size (sphere?) around my physicality. Perhaps your Inner-JI has filled its space and as you flow your Will longer and more frequently your Inner-JI (IJ) 'compacts' into a more refined, more energetic condition. This natural condition is enveloping you with an evolving re-member-ance of union.

Konx...This remembrance is of such intense return to your original nature that often -

orgasm ensues. Your orgasm is your pop-off valve. How close can you get to your orgasm w/out passing your event horizon? Replay time up to that point - then backwards to the beginning of your arousal. Allow your IJ to center itself. Now flow it into your play. Keep your partner, your IJ, and yourself in the Now... in your sphere. You flow the Bitch Goddess flows you.

Om...The IJ you are flowing with consciousness now becomes as your 1st orgasm did. You are energetic within the body of your sphere. Allow that spiraling around the orgasm w/in your sphere. Again - how close can you get to your orgasm w/out passing your event horizon? Again - reverse time up to that point. Allow your IJ to center itself. Before, y'all were the point, Hadit inside your sphere of Nuit.

Yet Now, y'all slip into the Being of Nuit with your IJ as the Point. It is at this juncture of space-time where the roles flip: the Point into the All; Hadit into Nuit, that orgasm may erupt - that is generated within your sphere. The sphere that contains your physicality. Within which originates orgasmic input. Whirlings w/in whirlings.

Pax...Your initiation has now achieved closure - a return to the beginning. This 3rd level your orgasm resides in is your understanding. Cycle this technique - use these mechanics as a mantra, then dis-solve technique, terminology, and lift out through mantra. Dwell in Understanding, not Reason. Upon that lightening bolt of Understanding - burn this letter; it has always been useless; just so much babble. Your Inca, your proof of Understanding w/in this system will be the smudged ashes of this letter upon your next note to me. Your mounting self-awareness and self-assurance provokes such a wetness.

Let's visit again. Your escort...

DarqSyde

Love is the law, love under will.
Be safe - never masturbate with a self-winding watch.

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About the Cover Artists

This issue's cover image is a collaboration between Srs. Qadisha and Conscientia Clara. Sr. C.C. is a professional artist who recently created the dust jacket for Robert Anton Wilson's new book, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*. Soror Qadisha is an artist and the design editor for this publication.

Art and Artists in This Issue

Magdalene - Srs. Qadisha & Conscientia Clara

Septagram - Soror Conscientia Clara

Gaia- Soror Sundari Lalita

Astrological Septagram - Soror Conscientia Clara

Eye - Soror Conscientia Clara

Untitled - Soror Sulis

Queen of Swords - Soror Qadisha

Untitled - Kiri Namtvedt

The Scarlet Letter is always looking for
talented Thelemic artists.

If you are interested in submitting,
please e-mail Soror Qadisha.

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Magick of the Urpflanze

Art and Artists

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Chichen Itza through
the Eyes of a Magician

by Oalimn

We had decided to journey on the free highway from the coast to the ruins. This was an experience of its own. My husband drove as I took pictures and absorbed the scenery.

We drove through many very poor towns, which were mostly mere villages. I had to laugh at the fact that at each village that we drove through, there was always a perro (dog) in the middle of the road to greet us as we entered.

Noon was approaching, and we had agreed early on to drop at this time. We found a roadside shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe on our entrance to yet another village. We both felt that this was the perfect place to taste the elixir of insight. This being done, we had about thirty minutes to enjoy the present state of mind before proceeding to the next. We continued forward, anticipating our arrival at the ruins. We finally arrived around 1:30 p.m. It was very commercialized and there were tourists all around us. This was not what I had expected when packing the rubbers and lube earlier. Some quiet time with my lover was clearly not going to be an option.

We paid our pesos and proceeded into the site. At this point, I was well on my way up, but managed to keep my mind very focused. I knew this was going to be the experience of a lifetime. The sun emerged from the pillow of white clouds. As I looked ahead I could see a very large pyramid of stone. I took a minute to honor the spirits that were obviously present and assure them that I came in peace to enjoy the magnificent monuments to their presence.

We began to ascend the great stone steps. A feeling of pride and excitement filled every fiber of my body. As we continued upward, a strong current of magical energy flowed over the stone steps. It seeped from the crevices and cracks. I could touch it with my soul. My entire body of light was energized with it. I was back in time when this shrine was active. I was so alive that I felt I might explode. We had reached the top. From the mouth of the shrine emerged a dark presence. I knew I was very receptive at this time, and proceeded with caution. I felt neither good nor evil from it, but a strong sense of accomplishment. Walking in this holy place made me feel very overdressed. We walked around the top of the pyramid, people were hugging the walls in fear of the great height. My heart was pounding loudly, but not out of fear. It was more from the exhilarated feeling at being on top of this summit of the earth. This was truly a gateway of some sort, and many souls had journeyed through the cycle of life and death here. I looked out to encompass the total view of the site. It was like nothing I had ever experienced in this life. Jungle stretched out over the horizon, mingled with stone structures of temples, markets, and playing fields. If I looked clearly I could see the Maya going about their daily activities. Their residue was concrete, and I reveled in the vision of children playing and others selling their wares. I could also hear the screams of the captives as they were tortured until death became a welcomed ally. I meditated on the southeast corner of the summit, feeling the overwhelming presence of the Mayan gods--their bodies taking form in the clouds above. It was a beautiful vision to behold. I could have sat in that place for hours. It was so tranquil and hypnotizing that I did not want to look away from its loveliness. However, I was finally drawn into the shrine where the priests must have spent most of their time. The walls unfolded the story of the past.

The old blood revealed to me the priests with their matted blood-stained hair and clothing. The lust for spilled blood was in their eyes. They were ready to sacrifice. Then the wall changed and a vision of kings, festivals, and rituals emerged into a colorful collage. There were too many mundane bystanders to permit me to appreciate this vision for long, and we moved on.

Our journey next brought us to the old original temple of this site. My senses were assaulted with the overwhelming presence of death! I could feel the hair on my neck standing straight up. A cold chill ran down my spine and I could not shake the pain and suffering impressed upon me. Columns of stone stood aright in the front of the shrine. Walking between them, I could feel the torture that the captives had endured. I could see the captives chained to the columns left out for the sun to bake their tender flesh. Trenches of stone were placed between some of the columns. These were used to catch the entrails that spilled from the captives. It was all very morbid. I wanted to climb to the top, but it was not permitted. So I wandered to a spot where I could climb partway up the side. Something urged me on to get a closer look at this dismal place. I approached an opening in the pyramid. It was dark and evil. An overwhelming vibration of ill came from within this space. Suffering and anguish flooded this area. I had enough of this evil feeling, but I urged my lover to have a look. He felt it too--something not very pleasant. We took seats in the shadow of the steps of this powerful shrine, Chac Mool overlooking us from the top of the pyramid.

My lover indicated a few thoughts concerning death and our daughter Cymoril. Tears welled in my eyes in happiness that she did not suffer and in sadness over my own selfishness for wanting her here. It was very cleansing. I could not imagine how such an awful place could bring this peace I felt with her death. But it did, and I cannot explain it fully.

We did not dwell long; it was time to continue on to the far side of the shrine. There were many great columns in rows of three. I felt that this place must have been a sort of jail. I walked in the place of the black guard who would whip the captives just to hear them moan or to see them bleed. The thought made my skin crawl. I was struck with a realization that Revelation in the Bible is connected with this place. My interpretation was prompted by the overall feeling of war, conquest, and sacrifice, and I believed that I was putting pieces of the puzzle together. Vibrations of energy entered my feet, and I could feel it all the way up to my crown chakra. It was not a pleasant feeling, and as I proceeded forward, pictures of blood pouring from the mouths of stones entered my vision. I urged myself forward even though my senses were overwhelmed with nausea. The next place we approached had a slightly different feeling. Captives tortured here were raped and even split apart through their lower orifices. I wanted to go behind this stone structure, but I was paralyzed with fear--for there were unspeakable events that had taken place here.

Rows of columns stretched out to our right and in front of us we came to an enclosed structure. Some archaeologists indicated that this was some sort of market area, and others took it for an administrative plaza. A very powerful force was present; it seemed many souls cried out for release here. I decided this is where I could do a little ritual, and commenced with the Star Ruby. Perhaps if this was a place of government, then this would be where captives were judged to see what sort of death awaited them. Our next visit was to the ball court. From my impression of this playing field, it would have been better to name it a "massacre court." I pictured captives tortured and made to do activities that eventually resulted in their deaths. Blood sports took place to entertain and walls were encrusted with old blood from this pastime.

I should point out that these visions and impressions were my own subjective experience. Others might have very different encounters with this place. The people of this culture were very serious about their worship of the gods. Their way of life, although very foreign to me, commanded my respect. I felt revulsion at the indications of torture and bloodshed, but their temples and monuments are enduring witnesses of a true form of higher intelligence. I would encourage any magician to make such a pilgrimage to Chichen Itza. Someday I will go back, since the weather didn't permit us to finish our explorations. Perhaps on that journey I will find more expressions of life than the cold hands of death that I experienced this time. Buenos noches!

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Thelemic Culture - Part II
Kephra Night
by Soror Sulis

In keeping with our family's resolve to provide instruction in Thelemic symbolism to our children through observation of holy days, we decided to celebrate the equinoxes and solstices. And what could be more appropriate, than to equate the solar year with the solar day, and apply Resh to the year? This places Ra rising at the Spring Equinox for the Feast of the Crowned and Conquering Child. Hathoor at Summer Solstice brings the Holy Cow Fiesta, complete with barbeque and Hathoor pinata. Atum presides over the Autumn Equinox, and Kephra at the longest night of the year, the Winter Solstice.

The following is a dramatic ritual, written in bare bones style for very young audiences with short attention spans. The older children participate in the preparation and presentation of the ritual, and seem to enjoy the secret knowledge of what lies behind the veil. The concepts are simple, the phrases are ones they will hear we adults use throughout the year, in Mass, in the Rites, and at the Feasts and Rituals they are permitted to attend. The gifts we pass out at the end of the ritual are intended to add further emphasis: we give oranges to represent the Sun, gold paper ankhs for rebirth, scarabs and nuts for Kephra. Sun shaped cookies, and round cookies iced with chocolate to represent the sun at midnight make great after-performance refreshments. The colors for the season are black, dark green and gold.

Without further ado, we present:

KEPHRA NIGHT

Kephra by Conscientia Clara

CAST OF CHARACTERS

AHATHOR: THE MIDDAY SUN

ATUM, THE SETTING SUN

KEPHRA, THE MIDNIGHT SUN

HOOR-PAR-KRAAT, THE BABE IN THE EGG

(The temple is dimly lit, as though it were twilight. The tomb is erected in the west, and Atum, bearing the bark of the Sun lit with three candles, stands with Ahathor in front. To the north Kephra is seated with a black altar in front of her. The high altar is veiled and dark, with the babe in the egg concealed within.)

ATUM: Ahathor! Thou Eye of the Sun! Tell me, daughter, what is the hour?

AHATHOR: The hour is one moment past the setting of the Sun!
My two hands are raised to thee in praise and thanksgiving when thou settest in life.

ATUM: I journey forth to deliver the bark of the Sun to the House of Kephra.
(he processes slowly to the House of Kephra in the North)

Homage to thee, O Heru-khuti, who art the god Kephra, the self-created.
(He blows out a candle)

The light is fading! The nights are getting longer, the days are getting colder!
(he puts out a second candle)

The end is almost here. We approach the House of Kephra.

(When he reached the House of Kephra in the north, he places the bark on the altar)
Hail unto thee who art Kephra in thy hiding
Even unto thee who art Kephra in thy silence.
Who travelest over the heavens in thy bark at the midnight hour of the Sun.
Tahuti standeth in his splendor at the prow and Ra Hoor Khuit abideth at the helm.
Hail unto thee from the abodes of Sunset!

KEPHRA: (rising) The King is dead!

ATUM: Long live the King! (Blows out the last candle and exits)

(Kephra picks up the bark of the Sun and processes towards the east, in her silence. Drums are played slowly at first. About 1/3 of the way to the east, she pauses to light a candle. The drums increase tempo. About 2/3 of the way to the east, she pauses and

lights a second candle. The drums increase tempo until she arrives at the altar.

KEPHRA: Homage to thee, O thou who rises on the horizon in the form of Ra,
who rests upon Law, [which can neither be changed nor altered].
Thou pass over the sky, and every face watches thy course,
For thou thyself art hidden from their gaze.

Hail unto thee from the abodes of midnight!

(She lights the third candle. The veil is opened to a brilliantly lit altar, with effigies of the sun abounding. Hoor-par-Kraat, the Crowned & Conquering Child, is seated in the center of the dais, clothed in gold and white, finger pressed to the lips, surrounded by goodies for the children)

KEPHRA: Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law!

HOOR-PAR-KRAAT: Love is the law, love under will!

ALL: Hail, O Crowned and Conquering Child!

FINIS

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Jewels From the Naked Brilliance
Shifting Aeons
by Nephthys

I as a Thelemite hold a belief that the world today is in the infantile stages of the Aeon of Horus. Many other Thelemites who study Crowley's works tend to hold the same belief, though there are exceptions. Now that we are in the midst of what followers of The Book of the Law believe to be the 93rd year of the New Aeon, I've become quite interested in what's going on in the world around us in relation to the beliefs of Thelema. For the record, I believe that big changes are coming in the Order of the Universe, and they will affect us all deeply, especially those of us who are paying attention to the Birth of Individuality as the Aeon of Osiris ends and the Aeon of Horus begins. I believe the day will soon come that those people who have struggled against societal oppression for their distinctly independent religious views will be called upon to be guides for the rest of the world trying to birth itself from the confines of oppression and conformity.

Most people are familiar with the concept of the astrological Aeons. If they're not, you say 'Age of Aquarius,' and most immediately pseudo-understand what you're talking about. The process is based on the Precession of the Zodiac: from our perspective, we are slowly moving backwards through our Zodiac at the rate of one sign about every 2200 or so years. It takes approximately 25,000 years for the Great Wheel to complete one rotation, so it's impossible to pinpoint a date for the change of an Aeon. However, amongst many astrologers, it's fairly well accepted that the world is in the middle of the change from the Aeon of Pisces to the Aeon of Aquarius by way of the theory that it's not a switch, it's a long period of transition. This is based on comparisons of history with

astrological data. This transitional period allows evolution to occur in slow steps, as is necessary. The beginning of an aeon transition spurs the creation of visionaries and poets: someone has to realize what's going on so that they can lead the rest through. Unfortunately, history has not been kind to such enlightened folk. Their battle is often long and arduous. But more on that later.

Many believe a date in 1962 to be the marker of the beginning of the transition from Pisces to Aquarius, as the 7 inner planets all lined up in Aquarius on February 4 that year. This alone is not horribly significant: on May 3, 2000, the same planets will line up in Taurus, though the Age of Taurus is certainly not about to begin. However, it bears remarkable interest considering the events that occurred in the following decades. These seven are the personal, as opposed to generational, planets. Individuality has certainly been a personal issue for most people the world over since around the 60s: the Civil Rights Movement kicked into high gear, and later, more minorities from the Native Americans to women decided to band together to fight for their freedom. Human rights in 3rd world countries became and have stayed a forefront issue. The general issue of each human's right to freely express themselves is the basis for almost every political and social dispute that exists. Now that we are approaching the end of the century, two of the three outer planets, the generational ones, are moving into Aquarius. These are the planets that affect change on a global scale, not just a personal one.

Jupiter has been in Aquarius since January of 1997, as had been Uranus since April of 1995. Between January 29, 1998 and February 4, 1998, I think the world will receive a shock somewhere in the realms of religion and society. As Neptune enters Aquarius on January 29, the Sun and Uranus will be conjunct in Aquarius: Uranus rules Aquarius and is the ultimate marker for unique dramatic change. This change will likely involve high-end technology in some manner: the Internet now has the power to effect global change due to its omnipresence. A T-square is formed in the sky throughout these few days between Pluto and the Nodes. The South Node is in Pisces, the North Node opposite in Virgo. I believe this indicates a need for society in general to use its Piscean energy towards service to others, spurred by a very painful and truthful revelation in the area of higher knowledge and education (Pluto in Sagittarius). Mars in Pisces is opposite the North Node in Virgo so is square to Pluto as well. This leads me to believe that whatever revelation Pluto brings about will thwart the aggressive efforts of the outgoing Aeon of Pisces: it will reveal a deep deception of some sort.

The configuration as a whole indicates a very intense and potentially violent scenario that lasts from January 28th until February 10. With 5 bodies in Aquarius (Neptune, Uranus, Sun, Jupiter, Moon) for one day, and 4 the rest of the time, opinions will be heated and there will be much concern for the general welfare of Humankind in general, especially those who may be experiencing the event firsthand. The North Node is quincunx to the Sun and Uranus. This is an aspect that I attribute to Neptune and is a marker of great spiritual potential. Here it indicates that there exists the possibility for this change to bring about the shift in attitude that is needed to bring us out of the Aeon

of Pisces and towards the Aeon of Aquarius. It is also what will keep the negative side of the Pluto/Mars square from being expressed: violent perpetuation of the Piscean status quo. Pentagram

As Jupiter enters Pisces on February 4, another T-square forms between the Moon, Chiron, and the Sun. It is very brief, but I think hints at the emotional mood for the next few days. Any time the Sun and Moon are squared, it means that it's necessary to break free from previous notions about behavior in order for growth to occur. True individuality, in other words. The Sun at the apex of the T-square is the goal of both Chiron in Scorpio and the Moon in Taurus. Humans will need to integrate their resistance to change with the power they've gained through change in order to realize their full individual potential. Chiron represents the capacity of the human soul to offer teaching and guidance out of its own chaos and trauma; thusly is the soul healed. A day later when the Moon is in Gemini, a Mutable Grand Cross is formed with the Nodes, Mars, Pluto, and the Moon. Communication and knowledge (Moon and Pluto) work together to bring deception into the light (Mars and South Node in Pisces) towards the greater good (North Node in Virgo).

As Neptune, the ruling planet of Pisces, approaches Aquarius, the subconscious grip of the material world (Capricorn) upon the world is increasingly apparent. Money, drugs, and power have become God, the consequence of a world seeking their souls through the trappings of mundanity. This is extremely Osirian in my opinion: selfish religious leaders think they can gain power and immortality by accumulating as much wealth as possible. This is a distortion of the premise underlying the Egyptians' custom of burying their dead with the finest clothing, jewelry, and food to ensure they would live on after they 'died': positive manifestation of the Osirian energy. Something will happen that will send shock waves throughout the world causing people to realize that solace can no longer be found in the powerful, authoritative world of Capricorn. However, they will still cling to their old ways because Neptune will go retrograde and re-enter Capricorn from August until November of 1998. Once Neptune re-enters Aquarius for the last time in November, the cycle of transformation will be well underway, having begun with Neptune's direct motion in October 1998. The old materialistic world will fall away to reveal a world of individuals who seek their own paths without the hindrances of others' burdens. Interesting that this final passage into Aquarius will take place while the Sun is in Sagittarius, the sign of art, truth, and adventure. It is also conjunct Pluto, the planet of regeneration and transformation.

The Aeon of Aquarius will be sealed by this Scorpionic energy when Pluto enters Aquarius on March 23, 2023, on January 21, 2024, and again on November 20, 2024, while the Sun is in Aries, Aquarius, and Scorpio respectively. But wait, you say. All these planets will pass through Pisces after they pass through Aquarius. How can you say they are markers of the Aeon of Aquarius? Since the passage of these planets, both the personal and transpersonal throughout the 20th Century, has occurred and will occur in the pattern that I've noticed, I believe that the subsequent passage through Pisces will serve as the perspective we will need after being presented with the powerful energy of Aquarius. There are lessons to be learned from each Astrological Aeon. As

with any transformation, it will be Humankind's tendency to jump in with both feet and leave the old way behind in every way, shape, and form. We will need the perspective of Pisces to remind us of the positive things the Aeon of Pisces had to offer, and to help us integrate that knowledge into our new way of life.

The Aeon of Pisces has been marked the two things that are most characteristic of the sign Pisces: awareness, and its opposite, deception. They go hand in hand, and you can't have one without the other. The problem today stems from the fact that the global energy associated with the Aeon of Pisces is in its death throes: whenever anything dies, it usually goes kicking and screaming. Both awareness and deception are at their peak in the world today. Deceptions of every type plaster the headlines, yet everyone is quite aware of what's going on. The deceivers are very aware of their deception. The deceptees are quite aware they're being deceived. All this seems to result in a sort of global gridlock. In the midst of this standstill, violence is rearing its ugly head. Awareness of deception resulting in action rather than inaction: this is the result of the birth of the Aeon of Aquarius. And the Aeon of Horus.

The scariest part of this transition is that it must involve religion by virtue of evolution. The Tree of Life ascends from the lowest world, represented by Earth and the Material, up to the highest world represented by Fire and the Spirit. Ancient history shows when the battles of Earth, Water, and Air occurred. The fight for Earth was Humankind's physical evolution towards its mastery of the planet itself: how to grow things, herd animals, survive on the material plane and nothing else. The fight for Air occurred much later, as thinkers and philosophers began to achieve notice in the world. Plato, Eurypides, Aristotle and the like. The fight for Water began in the Renaissance period, as the Dark Ages came to an end and people learned to express their inner selves, to a certain extent anyway. Certainly people were far more free and expressive than they had been before. These changes have extended their fingers into our own recent memories. Scientists still fight for recognition, people still fight over their land, and people are still fighting for their right to express themselves. This last change is fueling the final step into Fire, the evolution of the Spirit. With this transition, the problems of the last three can be overcome, as mastery of the Spirit becomes more widespread.

Note that all of these historical transitions have occurred in conjunction with catastrophic loss and sacrifice on the parts of individuals involved. The same is true today as the voices who are fighting for their spirits begin to get louder and louder. Since this battle involves matters that are innately linked to the soul and individuality, by necessity its altercations are violent. It is a conflict between individuality and the latent Piscean desire to be unified that is causing violence today. Those of us who are aware of the true nature of what is happening are just a few steps ahead of everyone else: we have completed the Pisces cycle and have entered the Aquarius cycle. Or from the Thelemic perspective, we have completed the cycle of Osiris and have entered the cycle of Horus. We are exerting our individuality in what we know to be productive ways, but since the rest of the world has not yet caught up, we are seen as frightening, outside the watery cocoon of Pisces. Our "child" has already matured enough to do something with all of its energy, but it's difficult to help others evolve when you're still being held back

by yet someone else. Hence the repeating phenomenon to kill the messenger, or to shun the prophets, visionaries, and poets. This tendency to deny the truth is even stronger since it is Pisces we are leaving: no sign has a stronger power to deceive itself.

There should be something to be learned from the other Aeon transitions according to traditional astrological belief. The Aeon of Aries was marked by the rise of some of the world's most ancient civilizations. And the end of the Aeon of Aries was marked by some of the worst bloodshed history has ever seen. The roots of today's wars in the Holy Lands lie in this transitional period. It would seem that the incoming Aeon of Pisces was able to use the outgoing Aeon of Aries to give a final smash to existing society then, since such violence is not typically characteristic of Pisces. Each incoming Aeon utilizes the lessons and power of the previous Aeon to ensure its own success and integration. The Aeon of Aries used the power of Taurus by dominating agriculture to ensure its stability. The Aeon of Pisces used the power of Aries to enforce its subconscious effect: putting 'the fear of God' into the people. And the Aeon of Aquarius will use the power of Pisces to engender the awareness of individuality.

On a global scale, society has reached what I think is 'the point of no return.' Something drastic has to happen or the state that things exist in now will continue in perpetuity. This drastic thing will have to serve to unite all people who live upon the Earth, but I think it will serve to divide them first: death must occur before birth. I have no idea what this factor will manifest as. I've heard numerous theories. Whatever happens, the birth of the individual on a global scale in order to survive will be mandatory. Social Darwinism will become Literal Darwinism. Except it won't be who's strongest, though violence is likely to increase as this process moves on. It'll be who's managed to find their True Will. This is where the job that I spoke of comes in. Our Duty To Mankind is to be guides for everyone else as well as protectors of our brethren as the Crowned and Conquering Child takes its seat.

"As brothers fight ye." Liber AL III:59

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The Natural Dreamer
Part III: Discovering the Meaning of a Dream

by Oalimn

Fable by Martijn Benders There is nothing that can be more frustrating than having a great dream but not being able to decipher its meaning. Through my own experiences I have found that breaking down the dream--almost like diagramming a sentence in English class--is very useful. It is also important to have an understanding of what is happening in your day-to-day life.

For example: Chester had a dream that he was in the ocean swimming. Suddenly the current became very strong--winds were fierce and he grew very tired quickly. Chester then started to drown because the storm was too strong for him to stay afloat. He woke up. Now Chester tells me that in reality he is totally overwhelmed with school and work. He has midterm exams and he is not at all prepared to take them. Can you see how

Chester might have dreamed about drowning?

This is an easy case to solve, but what about dreams that are so bizarre that you feel like you're in a David Lynch film? As a magician, you have many tools at your disposal to begin deciphering your wacky dreams. I strongly recommend utilizing 777 and digging deep into your intellect for the meaning. Always remember the five senses when interpreting. This will help you break down the puzzle further. There are basic interpretations of colors like blue equals cold, sorrow, red for heat, anger, etc. Whatever your system is, use it.

Someone once asked me, if they dream about someone and in their dream that person dies, should they tell the person? Absolutely! Just because you dreamed of death does not mean that person will die. Well eventually we all die, but you know what I mean. Perhaps that person has an illness, and you could allow them to take the necessary steps to cure themselves. Or maybe that person will go through some dramatic change and you are preparing them for it. Remember, our dreams can be messages, whether for good or for ill. Keep a journal by your nightstand and if you are not disciplined enough to record all of your dreams, at least write down the ones that are disturbing in some way.

Don't forget, if you have any questions about dreaming, please write to the Scarlet Letter. I will answer them to the best of my ability. For now, ciao!

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by Criss Piss

This tract is an example of Criss Piss at his most brilliant and provocative, reprinted from his own California 'zine, ONUS circa 1993. The opinions represented herein are Criss' own unique perspective -- we neither endorse nor take responsibility for them, although we think they are funny as hell. -- Sr. Baphemetis Continuity, Editor

This may be YOUR LAST CHANCE!

Are you a "Christian"? Are YOU "Born Again"? Are you "SAVED"? Are you "Washed in the BLOOD of The Lamb"? Well, if you are, it's no "accident" that you are reading this pamphlet RIGHT NOW! This little tract could change your ETERNAL LIFE! This little booklet could be the most important thing you'll ever read, because it concerns the fate of YOUR IMMORTAL SOUL! This little message could be YOUR LAST CHANCE!

Where will I spend Eternity?

Think about it. Where will you go when you die? Where does the flame go when you blow out the candle? Will you go to Heaven or will you go to Hell? Or will you just be dead forever? Well, if you're a Christian, you already know the answer. You'll go to Heaven when you die, to be with your God forever.

DEATH IS EVERYWHERE

As we all know, DEATH is Ever Present. Any of us could kick-off at any time. You could be hit by a bus or struck by lightning JUST FOR READING THIS TRACT. You could have a heart attack or catch a stray slug in the Drug Wars. Either way you'll be dead dead dead. Even if you die of old age, at home, in your bed, "IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MAN ONCE TO DIE" (Coloss. XI Ch 9). You have to die. But where you spend ETERNITY is UP TO YOU! Remember, God gave you free will! Christian, I'm here to tell you the Good News! You DON'T HAVE TO GO TO HEAVEN!

HEAVEN OR HELL?

By all accounts, Heaven is a dull place, populated by De-Sexed Angels and smug, holier-than-thou prigs. Smoking is not permitted and the chief occupation seems to be the perpetual praising of a jealous and insecure God of Love and Goodness. Hell, on the other hand, is a hot, happening place with plenty of Sex and Thrills Galore. Most of the people you know will be there, and many friends and lovers will be reunited. The good people, party poopers, censors, hypocrites and evangelists will not be allowed in but will have to watch from Heaven knowing that "There but for the grace of God, go I."

YOU MUST CHOOSE

Would a God of Love really crucify his Own Son? Did Jonah really live for three days in the belly of a whale? Is Santa Claus really coming to town?

YOU MUST DECIDE

Only you can choose, but this helpful tract is here to guide you to Do The Right Thing.

SATAN IS COOL

Christians in general have a lot of misconceptions about Satan and His Kingdom. But the facts are simple:

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE GOOD TO GO TO HELL."

Anyone can go. We're not asking you to break all 10 commandments today; start out slow, a venial sin: tell a lie, lust in your heart, masturbate. See how EASY it is! Soon you'll be able to step up to the Big Time and STEAL, LIE, SWINDLE AND MURDER with the best of them. Commit ADULTERY! Cheat on your Taxes! You'll be amply rewarded - in this life and the next! By the time you die your carnal body will be able to withstand the kind of Hard-Core Jollies available in Hades!

"DO IT" TODAY

Just say this simple prayer and fill out the handy form. Satan Does the Rest!

"Dear Jesus, I know I asked you into my heart but now I'm asking you nicely to

leave. I want to go to Hell when I die and be with all the Cool People. Satan, I adore you and worship you like a God and I want to be with you always. NEMA!"

DID YOU "DO THE RIGHT THING?"

Check one:

☐ Yes! Christianity is stupid!

☐ No! I'm too chicken.

Cr 1990 ZSM

Zionica Satanica Masonica; Div. SecHum Co.

Back to the Table of ContentsThe Rites of Eleusis,
Synchronicities & Ego Death

by Sr. Qadisha

Ovid Incunabulus by Criss Piss

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Just before the Rites began this year, Soror Ariadne, Chris' widow, came upon a last will and testament among Chris' belongings. It was Chris' will that his vast library be donated to the Scarlet Woman Lodge. So on the anniversary of Chris' Greater Feast the Scarlet Woman Lodge became the proud owner of a wonderful library of many occult and rare books. The library is housed in Soror Ariadne's home and she has spent many long hours indexing all of the books and creating a check out system. The library is open to members twice per month. People from all over have started donating books so the library is growing!

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titled "Ego Death #1", "Ego Death #2," etc. In memory of Chris' Greater Feast and in celebration of the opening of the library, The Scarlet Letter will begin featuring some of Chris' fine art beginning with this issue. If you have internet access, please look at the art in full color (<http://www.scarletwoman.org/scarlett/tslhome.htm>).

Click for full size

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Illustration by the Author

Climbing and Trance-formation

by Kiri Namtvedt

"It would be totally ridiculous, if not absolutely foolish, to attempt to justify our climb. Besides, justification, and for that matter glorification, of climbing is unnecessary. We did what we wanted to do, and that was the whole of our law." - Laura Jasch

"... how does one explain climbing? Not the physical activity, but how climbing affects the mind, the senses, one's life. How would one describe the feeling of total exhaustion yet total elation from a successful ascent?" - Eric Sanford

Why should one climb a cliff? The uninitiated might call it 'foolish', 'crazy', or 'reckless'; a lot of work to attain a little elevation. For those who explore further, the physical activity leads to a world of intense focus and deep appreciation. Perhaps it would be safe to say that some activities are more likely to lead to self-discovery than others; that there are certain qualities to an action that are more or less transformative.

Climbing, like meditation, is conducive to attaining certain altered states of consciousness. Just as it is possible to sit in asana and think obsessively of what one is going to make for dinner, so it is possible to climb in a state of fear, thinking about the ground. Yet there is a mysterious mindset one can reach, sometimes completely by accident. A moment when the mind moves up instead of down. Fear of heights is not merely visceral, but intellectual, a product of our humanity. We look down over a drop and imagine the death below, the injuries that are all the more frightening for being unknown. It is these fears that make climbing something more than simply exercise.

Yet it is not only the fear, or the overcoming of fear but the intensity of the experience. The fear, or perhaps the knowledge of danger, plays into that. It is because of this knowledge that the climber is able to reach into his or her depths. We rarely reach our limits in the course of daily life. There's a special kind of self-knowledge in tracing the borders of those limits and realizing just how strong one can be.

"Climbing focuses many disciplines that are important in life. They range from honestly evaluating our own physical and mental capacities, to digging deeper within ourselves

than we ever have for strength and determination. To continue climbing in the face of enormous obstacles broadens our vision of what we can accomplish anywhere." - Carlos Buhler

My friend, Dave, and I were climbing in the Red Rocks area outside of Las Vegas. We had picked a route called Cat in the Hat which was definitely within our abilities, yet still an adventure. I had followed Dave up the first pitch, and now geared up for "the sharp end," to lead the second pitch. I started up the rough, slightly angled rock. Above me a wide crack split the rock, tending left. It was too wide for any of my protection. The only possible protection was a small horizontal notch in front of my face, but the sides angled outward; it would be difficult to get anything to stay in this gap. I fiddled with several different sizes of chocks. One seemed to fit, but it seemed liable to pull out.

I looked down. Dave was only about ten feet below me.

"What's up?" he asked.

"Nothing. Just... if this pulls it's going to be a long fall."

"Well?"

Well, indeed. The climbing above didn't look hard, but it was balancy, uncertain stuff. A low-angled slab - but no really positive holds, just the small, rounded nubbins of harder mineral deposits in the sandstone. The next safe spot was a ledge about ten feet up. If I fell and my piece of protection pulled out, the fall could be thirty feet or more.

I had to climb it. I had come here to climb and I couldn't make Dave lead everything. It was voluntary, dammit. And so I reached up, committed myself to the climbing, holding my breath and certain I would slip.

I moved up.

I reached the terrace above. The moment of transformation was not obvious, but as I continued up an interesting chimney the fear was gone. In its place came a focus and intensity of perception that made every motion purposeful, every thought pointed.

There is a physical component to this transformation, of course, as there is with any exercise. Climbing tones the entire body; in fact I've often noticed sore muscles that I didn't even know I had after an intense workout. It requires strength without bulk. This component of the transformation works with the others; as one becomes more aware of body and movement, so one becomes clearer and calmer.

Ultimately it is the self-knowledge gained through climbing that keeps me coming back to it. I am certain that other people gain the same benefits from other activities, yet climbing has maintained this mysterious hold on me. The totality of it, and the genuinely transformative effect it has had upon me, remain sacred and significant.

The answer for me was there the first time I climbed. After the terror came astonishment

-- at a fantastically beautiful world I hadn't known existed -- and wonder. After climbing I felt rejuvenated and stronger, better able to see past the jumble of daily stresses and demands to what is really important in life: Courage. Grace. Humor. Humility.- Susan E.B. Schwartz

Every day I live a life I used to think was impossible for me. Every day this passion continues to grow. And every day I'm thankful for the walk in the woods that led me to the rock; and to the rock, that led me to myself. - Craig McGillvray

All quotes originally appeared in Climbing Magazine.

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Eye by Conscientia Clara
Talx
with
DarqSyde
Eye by Conscientia Clara
Little Sister,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.
You ask, " How would I best defend myself, if attacked in a parking lot?"

Enter the dojo and let us speak of Do-Oz: the Way of Oz. Being a professional warrior of over 2 decades, Do-Oz has been my guide in several 'live or die' situations. Liber Oz contains volumes of intuition. An example: each "Man has the right..." passage, when utilized as a Koan, becomes an entrance to Light in Extension. However, passage 5 - "Man has the right to kill those who would thwart these rights" - will be our guide tonight.

Konx - Ponder that statement at length...what rights are you willing to risk death for? Are they not manifestations of Will in action? When I know, in a hazardous scene, that I am in tune w/my Holy Guardian Angel (HGA), I Will to risk death rather than to disregard that all-too-rare sacred communiqué. To do otherwise would be contradictory to my 93 training. I choose to live and to die as the warrior that I am. Will you? With that in mind, be aware that in many circumstances, Magick is simply a 'go to' subroutine:

1. I desire my result with all my heart
2. I care not one whit if my result happens or not
3. Return. (to previous program)

This represents your decision to enact Liber OZ.

Om - As we talked about earlier, you have discovered (remembered) a trigger to reach your center. (The mind-set brought about by your sexual excitation.) This is the realm your HGA inhabits. This is your 'place' in the universe; you can do no wrong there. As you re-member more, you will re-member other triggers that take you there. The developed warrior can be in this place as soon as the warrior recognizes the need to be

there. * Note: the more often you return to your place, the less you involve thought. Thought slows the warrior; thought can kill the warrior. "No think-Do!" - Mr. Miyagi. (Prophets are everywhere, if you but listen.) This is the realm of action, not re-action.

Pax - Now you are at the easiest part of the (survival) process; yet lack of experience here can make this the most difficult. (1) You made a conscious decision to enact Liber Oz; (2) Using your trigger, you returned to your 'place' of no-wrong; (3) You must lose your consciousness and trust the flow of your HGA. In the realm of no-thought, your HGA Wills to flow through you ... if you allow it! When your HGA flows, the particular 'right' technique required to win your survival situation will also flow. As the operator of your particular human being, you are already 'knowing' how to perform martial techniques. It is not necessary to study moves and techniques to employ them. One who studies technique but has not acquired the ability to center (enter the realm of HGA) will not be able to employ the techniques in a useful manner. Conversely, one who can center and allow HGA to flow - will survive. The decision whether to use a back elbow, a ridge hand, etc. can not be yours; to attempt to make it yours requires an out-pouring of energy on your part. To allow your HGA to move your body parts as needed requires no energy - in or out - on your part.

A digression: Jean d'Arc 'heard voices' at the age of 13; at 17, (the soon-to-be King) Charles VII placed her in command of his troops. In 8 days she lifted the 8 month English siege of Orleans. Of course the 'church' was not ready for this uppity woman, so she was toasted (in a bad way).

The point being - it is unlikely Joan studied the Art of War. Who would teach these secrets to a girl in her pre-teens ? Probably when hearing voices, she was in her center & her HGA was 'Knowing & communicating' with her. Her skill flowed without her conscious direction. How often did the male warrior society allow a teenaged girl to be their leader ?

Be brave...Center...Flow.

Thanx for the smudge upon your last letter. Little Sister, you continue to 'arrive'. Let's visit again.

Your escort...
DarqSyde

Love is the law, love under will.
Be safe - when contesting the 'church' - wear asbestos.

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Back to the Table of ContentsMagick of the Urpflanze
by Dionysos Thriambos
Pollination (Assyrian)

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.
In the invocation pronounced by the Priest on the first step of the dais in the Ceremony of the Introit, a specific formula of magick is declared under the figure of vegetable growth:

...not unto Thee may we attain, unless Thine image be Love. Therefore by seed and root and stem and bud and leaf and flower and fruit do we invoke Thee.

The Priest indicates that the infinite can only be invoked as Love. The plant anatomy which follows must then be a diagram of the creative will, since "Love is the law, love under will." It is described in seven stages, which-like all creation-naturally progress from a hidden condition to a manifested one. These seven stages can be referred to the seven horizontal planes indicated by the emanations of the qabalistic Tree of Life, and, in turn, to the psychological model advanced in the qabalah. (See the accompanying table.)

The creative process begins with the SEED or Hidden Master. Work proceeds from an

inscrutable source, whose name is "Mystery of Mystery." It is buried in the dark substrate of reality (the "Night of Pan" beyond the Abyss), just as the seed is buried in the earth.

The seed sends forth a ROOT, a still-subterranean extension that begins its orientation towards the world of events, i.e. the Universe of Contraries. It engages-on the Chokmah-Binah- plane-the dual polarity which characterizes all phenomena below the Abyss.

This Urpflanze ("archetypal plant") which symbolizes the will breaks into light by shooting forth a STEM, a distinct impulse towards change which has been determined by the seed and provided for by the root.

Of these seven segments, the one of greatest interest to the magician is BUD, which is at the mid-point of the series and attributable to Sol. In the process of the passage of the will from its hidden origin to its manifested accomplishment, the BUD is the point of balance at which magick force can be brought to bear with the greatest effect. In Liber Aleph, Crowley specifically references the "bud-will" and its importance in the Work of the Sovereign Sanctuary of the Gnosis.

A transliteration of BUD reveals the principal officers of the Mass in the guise of Tarot trumps: B = The Magician (Deacon), U = The Hierophant (Priest), and D = The Empress (Priestess). The astrological glyphs which correspond to these trumps likewise are of note, since Taurus (U) and Venus (D) combine in the figure of Mercury (B).

The bud opens into a LEAF, the visible surface which is the characteristic expression of the plant.

The leaves support the FLOWER, which brings the plant into communication with other creatures through sight and scent, and provides for pollination with other plants.

The pollination of the flower culminates in the FRUIT, the finally manifested product of the process, which conceals within itself new seeds to perpetuate the creative pattern. The journey of the fruit in returning the seeds to the dark earth is emblematic of a different formula complementary to the one under discussion.

A couple of illustrations may help to elucidate the application of the present formula. One example is the creative work of OTO through MMM as an initiatory institution. In this case, the SEED is Baphomet, the Secret Master, possibly considered as the esoteric instruction concealed in the depths of the rituals themselves. The ROOT is the Grand Master who authorizes the enactment of the initiations and is the custodian of their form. The STEM is the Initiator who implements the ceremony. The BUD is the Candidate who enters into the Mysteries. The LEAF is the Lodge (or Chapter, or other body) that results from the collaboration of initiates. The FLOWER is the Order as a whole, visible to the initiate and the profane. And the FRUIT is the totality of human society to which the Order offers the Law and the message of Universal Brotherhood.

Another instance is the production of literature. Here, the SEED is the secret muse of the author, the inspiration which brings him or her into the process of writing. The author as the original container of the idea issuing from the muse is the ROOT. The author's work of writing is the STEM by which literature raises itself into view. The BUD is the text itself. The text shows its LEAF in its publication. The reader savors it like the appreciation of a FLOWER. And the FRUIT is its passage into the world of discourse in literary posterity-a passage towards which the present study is directed as it passes from stem to bud.

Urpflanze				
Sephiroth				
Psychology				
Will				
OTO				
Initiation				
Literary				
Endeavor				
SEED	Kether	Self		
(Yechidah)	The Hidden Master, "source and seed of life, love, liberty and light."			
Baphomet	Muse			
ROOT	Chokmah-			
Binah	Life Force			
(Chiah), Intuition				
(Neschemah)	Emergence of the Master's design into the Universe of Contraries			
Grand Master	Idea			
STEM	Chesed-			
Geburah	Consciousness			
(Ruach)	Realization of the design in a particular impulse toward change			
Initiator	Writing			
BUD	Tiphareth	Formulation of the impulse as intention, balanced between the		
Hidden and the Manifested	Candidate	Text		
LEAF	Netzach-			
Hod	Expression of the intention	Body of Initiates	Publication	
FLOWER	Yesod	Animal Soul		
(Nephesch)	Perception of the expression	Order	Reading	
FRUIT	Malkuth	Body (Guph)	The Manifested Result	Humanity
Posterity				

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[Detail from Ego Death #7 at left](#)

[Art and Artists in This Issue](#)

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The Included Middle
by Tim Maroney (1998)
(Originally published in The Scarlet Letter, Volume V, Number 1.)

In this column I will be looking at magical and mystical issues from a skeptical perspective.

On a recent web-surfing expedition I discovered a web site dedicated to "progressive Thelema", and its introduction praised the virtue of skepticism. This interested me because doubt is one of my paradigmatic emotions -- a restless inquisitiveness that upon hearing a comforting explanation, immediately asks "what if just the opposite were true?" Reading on, I was disappointed to find that the first essay on the page took astrology for its starting point. It spun out corollary upon corollary from this unquestioned assumption, as if the influence of planetary positions on earthly life were an established fact.

What does it mean to be a skeptic? Classical skeptics such as Pyrrho, Timon and Sextus Empiricus were no kin to the current crop of debunkers. In the pages of the magazine "Skeptical Inquirer" one finds a philosophy of naive materialism and literal truth, but classical skepticism doubted even the existence of matter, and more, doubted that there was any reliable way to draw a distinction between truth and falsehood. A skeptic is one who doubts. The self-described "skeptic" of today is an ideological soldier for scientism, focusing doubt only against rival systems of thought and treating the preferred ideology with deference. A closer modern analogy to the skeptics of old can be found in the philosophies of existentialism and postmodernism, which recognize the individual's role in creating meaning, and treat value judgments as psychological processes.

Doubt is an emotion which all of us possess in greater or lesser degree, and which we apply to various subjects at various times. It is not necessary that everyone be a skeptic, only that people who describe themselves as skeptics earn the title. But to claim one is a skeptic while persistently turning a blind eye to the problems in one's pet theories is to fall short of the mark. This is just as true of those who propound specious refutations of astrology as it is of those who take the horoscope theory as a given.

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It is a mistake to think that skeptics must be opposed to the non-rational psychological phenomena of mysticism. What does it mean to be this peculiar thing, the skeptical mystic -- that is, a true skeptic who is also very concerned with experiencing and understanding what we are accustomed to calling the "spiritual"? For me the answer lies in a psychological paradigm called phenomenology. It is a subtle thing, and for years I could not grasp the notion, but now it has become fundamental in my approach. It revolves around acceptance of psychological reality as true on its own plane, without concern for its external truth. Rather than looking at materials of myth and trance from the judgmental perspective that classes them into truths and delusions, one simply observes them and tries to describe them. This is a basic principle guiding the ethnographic field observation methodology of anthropologists, a perspective that is both detached and engaged -- the self-referentially aware perspective of the participant-observer.

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by Tim Maroney (1998)

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[Various Essays](#)

This page is always under construction.

Here I have archived a number of my past writings, particularly ones that other people have saved over the years and republished on their own web sites. If you have an old favorite you've squirreled away, please send it to me and I'll consider whether I want to put it here, or whether I would prefer to find all copies and have them burned.

[The Included Middle](#)

After I became a member of Scarlet Woman Lodge of the O.T.O. in Austin, Texas in 1997, I began a series of columns for their magazine, The Scarlet Letter. The first two installments came out in 1998. The third was published in the newsletter of Hodos Chameleonis Oasis in Sacramento, California. The fourth appeared again in the Scarlet Letter.

The Included Middle - A brief essay on the interplay between skepticism and mysticism.
Facts and Phallacies - A much longer essay in response to Hymenæus Beta's Address to the Women's Conference, published in the Magickal Link, the O.T.O.'s international newsletter. This deals in excruciating, pedantic detail with the issue of Aleister Crowley's phallocentrism, and with some modern defenses of the sexist parts of his legacy.

A Letter to Close - A skeptical analysis of Crowley's "An Open Letter to Those Who Would Join the Order".

The Freedom of Doubt - An essay on the classical skepticism of Sextus Empiricus and

how it relates to various forms of skepticism in religious and mystical traditions, including a critical look at Crowley's claims of skepticism.

Why I Study Magic

In December 1997 Lilinah Biti-Anat asked me casually why I was into magic. I found this a very hard question to answer and it has taken me three months to get this response into shape. Why the difficulty? I have a distaste for formulaic answers, such as "to know and do my will," and when I approach my real love of the subject I become uneasy. Here is my current understanding of why I continue to be involved with a subject that is so often a source of dismay.

Introduction to Crowley Studies (in Five Voices)

In Fall 1997 this 10,000 word piece erupted from my brain in a great rush over the period of a few hours, preceding the final collapse of my four-year relationship and my resignation from my three-year stint at Apple. I was concerned that no one was looking at the magician Aleister Crowley (1875-1947) from a serious perspective. The O.T.O.'s publications provided only one-sided advocacy pieces, and most casual writing about Crowley was either biographical muckraking that ignored his contributions to spirituality, or devotional writing that assumed the literal truth of his odd system of belief. My own views lie at the center of this triangle. The literary conceit of the five voices was meant to serve two purposes: first, practice for fiction writing; second, a navigational aid for the reader in the sea of conflicting opinions about this most unusual character.

The Problems of Syncretism

This started as a network message on Thelema93-L in 1997, in response to concerns expressed by Jeffrey Smith about juxtaposition of Hebrew and Egyptian divine names in the Golden Dawn. Syncretism is a major issue in modern occultism and paganism, but most of the people practicing it don't know what it is. The idea that the monomyth should be studied as a valid myth rather than disparaged as bad scholarship had been growing in me for some time and this discussion gave me the perfect opportunity to express my thoughts on the subject. This version has been expanded and clarified, including responses to some issues raised by John Everall.

Why Crowley Doesn't Suck

This is another piece from the Thelema93-L mailing list in 1997. It is an attempt to answer the musical question, "Why would anyone study a creep like Aleister Crowley?" It laid some of the groundwork for the Introduction to Crowley Studies and Why I Study Magic and is presented here in its original form.

Healing the Spiritual Community

This 7,000 word essay on the psychology and sociology of the darker side of spiritual group dynamics was written in 1994. It is one of my life goals to expand this essay to its proper length and publish it as a book.

Theory of Divination

This essay was extracted from a Tarot HyperCard stack I worked on in 1990. It tries to survey a variety of approaches to the question of how and whether divination works. I

have fixed it up slightly to remove references to the context in which it originally ran. The multi-theoretical approach of the essay prefigures the multi-voice approach of the Introduction to Crowley Studies. I tried to disguise my own views; see if you can tell which theory I most endorse!

On the Definition of the Sacred

A network message from the late-1980's FidoNet/PODS period, this piece frequently turns up on the networks. The idea of a multi-dimensional analysis of spiritual experience seems to hold up fairly well. The message was written as a blast at a sysop who advocated my exclusion from these computer networks, and who had (conveniently) just made some rather foolish statements about spirituality and language. No one - including the victim - has realized that it could be read as character assassination, and in fact I have gotten requests that I write more non-inflammatory messages like this one!

Twilight Crossing

In the late 1980's, I had a series of visionary dreams and hypnagogic experiences, in which I was initiated in an underground realm by the goddess Hekati and her servant, the sorceress Medea. As a result I became a Hekatean in my own fashion, though at the time I was completely ignorant of Neo-Platonism and her role in it, and relied solely on classical mythology for information. At the same time I was embroiled in a number of disputes with the O.T.O., with Neo-Pagan and Witchcraft groups and with the Temple of Set. The dogmatism and irrationality that had irritated me in my discussions with Christians had turned out to be just as prominent in the esoteric groups in which I had imagined I would one day find a spiritual home. I did not want to join these groups but I wanted to work group ritual. Some of my discussion partners suggested that I should start my own group, and so I sketched out this one, more as a thought-experiment than anything else. Once people started getting interested, I realized I really did not want to run a spiritual group myself and so I rather unceremoniously shut it down. The message illuminates my Hekatean interests with what I have been told is some eloquence, and expresses interesting ideas about how a "liberal" occult group could be run.

Pagan History

This message was written for USENET's talk.religion.misc in early December 1986, in response to a request for information on paganism. I recently rediscovered it on an egosurfing expedition (that is, I was typing my name into search engines to see what people were saying about me). It is a little starry-eyed about the tolerance of pagans, and there are some issues of historical interpretation that I have since come to approach rather differently, but otherwise the piece seems to need little revision now. I have left it in its original state, except to correct a few typographical errors.

On the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram

After the right-wing fundamentalist Christians who ran the Computer Science department at UNC threw me off the network due to my occult and leftist views, I went to Carnegie Mellon and started the New Age Mailing List. At the time the term "New Age" hadn't been stigmatized as it has now, and this mailing list was "the first

international computer network run by a pagan or occultist, for pagans and occultists". This little essay appeared in the first number, on Fri Dec 21, 1984. This is a later draft from June 1990, which I have tweaked again in this March 1998 version. It is a practical instruction in one of the primary rituals of Golden Dawn-derived magic, from which the Wiccan circle ritual also derives. I will probably augment it with pictures in the future.

Even If I Did Believe...

This late draft of an early religious essay from 1983 and 1984 is an example of my "angry young man" phase. I have outgrown the anti-Christianity of the piece, and now feel that Christianity is no better or worse than most other religions overall. Those of us who were raised in it and came to realize that we were being sold a bill of goods naturally have feelings of betrayal, but other religions contain moral and ethical flaws of similar magnitude. This point is often missed because we know about foreign traditions largely from advocacy writing. Nonetheless, even after all this time, I am pleased with the style and the reasoning, and the piece remains a serious challenge to simple-minded Biblical literalism.

I must mention the two strangest things that have happened in connection with this essay. First, a man on net.religion adopted it as a religious creed, deciding that God was real and awful, and arguing from this point of view for several years. He appeared to be sincere. Second, and more recently, I was asked whether the essay could be used in an evangelical training program to make sure the students had answers to all my concerns. I did not respond to the request once its intent was explained and I do not know whether it was used in this way - but of course, educators are largely exempt from normal restrictions of copyright....

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The Book of Dzyan

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On the Definition of the Sacred

by Tim Maroney

At our present level of psychological understanding, we lack even the basics for a definition of such a vague term as "spirituality", except in terms of equally vague words such as "holy", "sacred", and "numinous". These terms can only be defined in terms of each other, so we have gained no real understanding or clarity with such definitions. We are merely playing shuffleboard with syllables. "Sacred" means "consecrated or holy"; "holy" means "divine or sacred"; "numinous" means "divine"; "divine" means "spiritual".

At some point in the future, our understanding of psychology may be such that we will be able to break these concepts down into genuinely simpler concepts, such as the interrelationship of neural clusters. But for now, they remain irreducible absolutes.

In the face of these circularities, many mystics fall back to the position of no-definition, often expressed in terms of the inherent inadequacy of language to capture the ultimate ground of reality. The Tao that can be named is not the true Tao; katz! But the same is equally true of the phenomena we typically consider mundane and non-spiritual. No language can genuinely capture a single red rose, or the sound of jackhammers at 7:30 on a Saturday morning. Language is by nature a scaled-down model of reality which fails to partake of the wholeness of the phenomenon it describes. There is no reason that language should be any less useful in discussing the "numinous" than it is in discussing the rose or the hammer.

The true problem in description of the spiritual is lack of a vocabulary. "Red" as an experience can't really be defined any more than "holy" can. It is just that we all know what the word "red" refers to, having experienced the referent ourselves, and having experienced the word in conjunction with its referent. Those who have experienced sacredness recognize it, and they may be able to suggest to each other a vocabulary for describing its particular manifestations. Those who do not know spirit will see this

vocabulary as a meaningless jargon. But even those who know should be aware that they are not explaining spirit with their vocabulary. They are merely labelling it.

And yet, people persist in the silliest attempts to explain the spirit with labels. We are bombarded by totally foolish "definitions" such as "feelings out of the ordinary" (does this include the feeling of being rear-ended by a purple Volkswagen?) and "other dimensions of consciousness" (the term "dimension" is surpassed only by "evolution" in its use as a meaningless buzz-word by the metaphysically inclined). Non-definitions of this sort are in their way as good as any other terminology, because those who have known the spirit will recognize more or less what the speaker is talking about, but they are no more basic - and a good deal more fuzzy-minded - than "holy", "sacred", and the rest of the crew.

So let us take sacredness as an indefinable but recognizable absolute, and starting from there try to develop a taxonomy of sacred experiences. Immediately new problems arise. First, religions have long worked to develop these terminologies themselves, yet no two religions can agree on them. Second, being more or less familiar with these religious systems, we may find it difficult to avoid invisible but powerful assumptions built into them - or, more likely, we will not even try, treating these basic assumptions as unquestioned fact. Third, we may once again fall into nonsense of the "dimensions of consciousness" or "feelings out of the ordinary" kind, imagining that we are analyzing things into more basic concepts when we are only spinning out absurdity.

Probably the most common error is to refer to "states of consciousness". This terminology ignores the fact that there are as many states of consciousness as there are moments in the lives of all sentient beings. It's as if we are imagining the mind to be a car, with first gear the "mundane consciousness", second gear the first stages of "religious illumination", and so on. But the mind is far more complex than a car; it does not have clearly distinct modes of operation. Each of its "states" involves billions of variables. Not only is one person's meditative trance not the same state as another person's, it is not even the same state for the same person from meditation to meditation, or from moment to moment in a single session. We can speak of broad classes of similar experiences, but not of states of consciousness.

"Red" is not a "state of vision"; it is one component of a visual experience which has many other factors and which will never be precisely duplicated in another experience. We do not see vision in terms of "states", but in terms of highly complex, multidimensional phenomena. Is the sacred simpler and more mechanical than the visible?

"States of consciousness" is an example of all three kinds of errors: using the terminology of a single school, not questioning the assumptions underlying a terminology, and mistaking a meaningless label for serious analysis.

Another common error is the confounding of classes. For instance, we might divide spiritual experiences into the immanent and the transcendent. The former sees the unity

(or voidness) of all phenomena; the latter sees all phenomena as transcended by some spiritual force or being outside the mundane world. This is a perfect valid measure of spiritual experiences, but it is not the only (or even the primary) measure. Many experiences are more similar to counterparts in the other class than they are to their classmates. Some belong in both classes or neither.

There are any number of spiritual measures, among which are static or dynamic, full or empty, harsh or soothing, personal or impersonal, free or structured, spontaneous or deliberate, passionate or arid, solitary or social, intellectual and emotional, differentiated and uniform, and so forth. We do not impose any useful taxonomy by putting one of these measurements above the others, dividing all spiritual experiences into type 1 and type 2. A static, full, harsh, impersonal, immanent experience is more like a static, full, harsh, impersonal, transcendent experience than it is like a dynamic, empty, soothing, personal immanent experience. But if we were committed to making a basic division between immanent and transcendent experiences, we would have to say that any immanent experience is more like any other immanent experience than it is like any transcendent experience.

In summary, no language is truly adequate to description of spirituality, but some terminologies are less adequate than others. Terminologies which claim to analyze but do not break notions down into more basic notions are nonsense. Terminologies which impose an oversimplified linear structure on the multidimensional nature of spiritual experience are misleading. Terminologies based on unexamined assumptions about the structure of the psyche and the superiority of some experiences to others are worse than useless.

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Even If I Did Believe...

by Tim Maroney (1984)

Introduction

I am not a Christian. In my discussions of this fact with Christians, I have repeatedly run into a major misunderstanding. The Christians assume that if I believed the Bible were true, I would become a Christian; that is, they believe that my reason for not being a Christian is that I don't believe in their god. This is not the case. In this essay, I will explain more clearly why I am not a Christian. The essay is not meant as an attack on Christianity, just as a statement of personal belief.

One disclaimer: The thesis of this essay is that even if a God as described in the Bible does exist, he is not fit for worship. Consequently, I speak sometimes as if I did believe the Bible, when in fact I do not.

If I had undeniable proof of the existence of Yahweh, aka Jehovah, aka Adonai, aka El Shaddai, aka Yahweh Elohim, the father of Jesus and the ancient leader of the Semitic peoples, I still would not worship the bastard. If an angel appeared to me and removed

my appendectomy scar so I could never deny the reality of divine power, I still would not be a Christian. My primary reason for not being a Christian has nothing to do with my lack of belief in their god. My primary reason is that the Bible is a disgusting book describing the behavior of a god without the morality of the average high school student.

That God does what he wants, when he wants, without even an attempt at self-justification, and all for what reason? According to Paul, all for his own greater glory. For his own glory he condemns billions to eternal torment, drowns millions of innocent beasts and thousands of children, orders the slaughter of entire cities down to the last man, woman, and child, creates a race that he knows is flawed and will hurt itself, refuses to deal with any other god on a friendly basis, rains doom on those who dare to try to be as knowledgeable as he is, and so on.

Hell

Jesus preaching love in no way atones for Yahweh's many hideous crimes; lest we forget, it was at the time of Jesus that he created Hell. This cruellest of all concentration camps (certainly far worse than the ones created by the Nazis) was at no time mentioned in the Old Testament, and the wrathful and threatening god of the Old Testament would hardly have omitted any chance to terrify his worshippers.

(Incidentally, the "Sheol" of the Old Testament is simply a generic term for the afterlife; neither modern scholarship nor Judaic tradition equates it with Hell.)

I have heard some Christians who believe that there is no everburning Hell in their religion, that the "lake of fire" is purely destructive, that sinners will be annihilated rather than tortured after the Last Judgment. Sometimes, they claim that medieval Catholics created that "myth", and that they would revile any god who made this concentration camp.

Well, get ready to start reviling then. The myth of Hell was not created in the Middle Ages. It is explicitly stated in a set of books called the Synoptic Gospels, you know, the ones by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Since some people don't seem to be very familiar with these books, usually considered the cornerstone of Christianity, I'll fill them in.

In Matt. 18:34-35, Jesus finishes up a parable about an unforgiving debtor with: "And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart." Not clean killing - you will be handed over to the torturers. In the parable of the wedding feast, Matthew 22:1-14, Jesus concludes with "Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and throw him out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.'" The king didn't say, "Execute him", but bind him and throw him into a painful place. This is echoed in Mat. 24:51, in almost the same words, and again in Mat. 25:30, again with similar words. Finally (for Matthew), we have Mat. 25:41-46, on the Last Judgment. "Next he will say to those on his left hand, 'Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels... And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to

eternal life."

My point is proven, so I won't bore you with the quotes from Mark and Luke; however, check out Mark 9:43, Mark 9:48-49, Luke 13:27-28, and Luke 16:23-26 if you still doubt. Why would Jesus have so frequently mentioned the existence of an afterlife of torment if that was misleading his followers? And why did he never imply the existence of a forthcoming destruction of the unfaithful?

Among the Christians who accept the reality of Hell, another rationalization is quite popular. This holds that Hell is in some sense voluntary, and chosen by its inmates. It's an interesting idea, and certainly one of the more interesting aspects of Dante's "Inferno" is the way the conditions of the damned reflect conditions created in life by their sins. I agree completely that the man who commits murder must live ever in fear of attack, that the thief will never feel secure in his property, that the liar can trust no one, and so on. By their offenses they create an unpleasant life for themselves.

However, you don't have to hurt anyone to get into Hell. All it takes, according to Scripture, is knowing about Jesus and not accepting him as Savior. It doesn't matter how virtuous you are, how much good you do, how happy an environment you create for yourself and others. Given this, the voluntary entry argument doesn't make sense. The same argument could be used to justify the sending of Aryan opponents of Nazism to concentration camps: they voluntarily chose not to give homage to Hitler, so they chose to be interred. Why should we blame the Nazis for the inmates' choice? Why should we blame Yahweh for the choice of the damned?

Genocide

You hear a lot from Christians about Yahweh's "infinite compassion and mercy". Tell it to the Midianites. Numbers 31 is a classic example of wholesale slaughter and rape under the direction of Yahweh. A sample of this tale: "They waged the campaign against Midian, as Yahweh had ordered Moses, and they put every male to death.... The sons of Israel took the Midianite women captive with their young children, and plundered all their cattle, all their flocks and all their goods. They set fire to the towns where they lived and all their encampments.... Moses was enraged with the commanders of the army ... who had come back from this military expedition. He said, 'Why have you spared the life of all the women? ... So kill all the male children. Kill also all the women who have slept with a man. Spare the lives only of the young girls who have not slept with a man, and take them for yourselves.'" Yes, friends, this is infinite mercy and compassion for you. I particularly like the way that Moses got upset with them for sparing women and male children, but allowed the young girls to be kept for later raping. If only humans could keep to such lofty standards without the necessity of divine revelation.

This wasn't the first time the Hebrews harassed the Midianites (although it was obviously the last...) Earlier, in Chapter 25 to be precise, Israel settled in Midian. Rather than toss the Hebrews out on their ear from this land of limited resources, the Midianites - well, I'll let the author of Numbers tell it: "The [Hebrews] gave themselves over to debauchery with the daughters of Moab. These invited them to the sacrifices of their

gods, and the people ate and bowed down before their gods. With Israel thus committed to the Baal of Peor, the anger of Yahweh blazed out against them. Yahweh said to Moses: 'Take all the leaders of the people. Impale them for Yahweh, here in the sun; then the burning anger of Yahweh will turn away from Israel.' Moses said to the judges in Israel, 'Every one of you must put to death those of his people who have committed themselves to the Baal of Peor.'

Now that is written in a rather negatively-connotated fashion. Look at what actually happened: Israel arrived in Midian. The Midianites welcomed them like kinfolk. They let them date their daughters; they invited them to come to Church. Right neighbourghly reception, if you ask me. Some of the Hebrews, no doubt impressed by the friendly ways of these people, took up the local customs of their own free will. So what does Moses do? He puts spears through them and lets them rot in the sun. Who's the bad guy here? I'd say it's pretty obvious. Neither apostacy or fornication deserve the death penalty - or do you think we should start frying unwed mothers and those who leave their religion, by Federal law?

Right on the heels of this comes a plague. This is blamed by the Hebrews on one Zimri, who had the incredible gall to actually marry a Midianite woman! Fortunately, a zealous son of Israel speared them both right through the genitals, and the plague went away. Now we moderns know that disease just doesn't work that way, but a more important objection concerns a point of Biblical trivia. Of what nationality was Zipporah, the wife of Moses? You have five seconds ... That's right, she was a Midianite! But for some reason Moses' genitals were allowed to remain intact. This makes marriage to a Midianite seem like less than a capital offense.

I don't think the firstborn in Egypt during the captivity would have agreed with the verdict of compassion and mercy (Ex. 11:5,12:29). Yahweh could have teleported the Jews out of captivity without bloodshed, or put the Egyptians to sleep while they left, but no. That wouldn't be gory and exciting enough for him. Now rivers of blood, killing innocent children: there's something you can really sink your teeth into.

It was due to Yahweh's hardening of Pharoah's heart in the first place that made the later cruelties necessary. And why? Yahweh explains to Moses in Ex. 11:9, "Pharoah will not listen to you; so that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." Wonderful. All those children and adults tortured and killed, for the same reason that would lead one of us today to set off fireworks. This is immorality, pure and simple.

The entire book of Joshua is a long sequence of atrocities. I have not given all these quotes for space reasons - I urge you to look them up for yourself. If you are not shocked, then your moral standards must be low indeed.

Of course, you will sometimes hear rationalizations of this slaughter. There are two major forms: the corruption argument and the mercy argument. The former says that those slaughtered were evil and deserving of their fate; the latter says that since they were religiously incorrect, it was a mercy to terminate their existence.

The corruption argument simply does not hold up. The people slaughtered in the Old Testament were almost uniformly blameless (with a few exceptions, of course - for instance, the Sodomites violated the conventions of hospitality.) Usually, no justification is offered beyond the fact that since they were of another tribe, it was OK to kill them. And it goes without saying that the hordes of slaughtered children were innocent.

As to the mercy argument: They shoot horses, don't they? However, people are not animals to be destroyed against their will in the name of mercy. If I don't claim to be suffering, and don't ask to die, neither you nor any god has the right to decide that you know better. If a person tried to do this to me, I would shoot him; if a god tried, well, the only weapon I would have would be withholding my worship.

Neglect

Most of us, given omnipotence, would be able to do a far better job than Yahweh. What would you do if given omnipotence? If your answer is anything other than "abolish world hunger", there's something more than a little skewed in your perception of mankind. There is no question that this is the greatest evil in the world today. The second thing would be to abolish disease, right? This doesn't take "infinite mercy", just normal compassion and a bit of common sense. God's supposedly infinite mercy is apparently the same thing as no mercy at all.

What makes this particularly unforgivable is that even Jesus's own standards demand feeding of the poor. See Matthew 25:35, in which it is stated that the blessed feed the hungry, and that the damned do not. Yahweh is held blameless, though, for not feeding them. Does the old saw about "practicing what you preach" not apply to Yahweh? Is his hypocrisy not a sin?

Usually, when I bring this up in a discussion, someone says, "No; it is the evil of men that is to blame; they have lots of money and keep it to themselves rather than feeding the poor." This argument uses a double standard. Men are held guilty for not feeding the poor, while Yahweh is held innocent for doing exactly the same. In fact, it would be far easier for Yahweh to feed all the poor than for any man to feed even one! Men are certainly not blameless here, but it is Yahweh who is the true villain.

One popular rationalization of this is that for Yahweh to feed all the hungry would somehow (and it is never explained how) make it more difficult for people to get into Heaven. Sure, and another reason is that it would make the quality of newspapers worse, right? You can't just say that two things are connected when there is no apparent or explained link between them! (Well, you can, but you'd be making a fool of yourself.)

Another popular rationalization is that life without "challenges" would be boring and dehumanizing, so Yahweh does not remove them. The fallacy here is grouping all challenges together. I personally lead a very challenging and satisfying life, but I have not lately had to flee any volcanos or earthquakes, go without food for a week, or suffer the ravages of some disease. I would be quite happy, in fact, if I never do have to face

such challenges as those. There is plenty of room for amelioration of the human condition without making it dull. Another objection here is that the same people who like this rationalization usually believe that they will enter a world that is perfect and without challenge after death, but they don't seem particularly put off by it

Other Gods

Suppose you were a god and there were other gods. What would you do? What I would try to do is the same thing I do as a person among other people - try to make friends or at least truce with as many of them as possible. The jealous Judeo-Christian god does the opposite.

Some people feel that Yahweh is the only god, and therefore cannot be faulted for not having friendly relations with other gods. This idea is a fairly modern invention: that not only is he the best god, but the only one. Yahweh is repeatedly referred to as "our God" in the Pentateuch, and there is no implication until Isaiah that he is the only real one. Also, try Deut. 5:7-9. It is psychotic to be jealous of nonexistent beings. The statement "You shall have no gods except me" clearly implies that the contrary is possible. However, I am willing to grant that there are no other gods for the sake of argument.

Suppose you were an omnipotent god and there were no other gods. What would you do? Perform a continual sequence of verifiable miracles; after all, this doesn't require any effort, and keeps people from delusion. No such luck in the case of Jehovah. He demands absolute fidelity without any demonstration of his existence, beyond some visionary manifestations of the sort that you can get from any religion.

Christians commonly rationalize this in one of two ways. First, they claim that there is a virtue in believing something without proof; that is, faith in itself is held to be a virtue, and Yahweh doesn't want to remove our opportunity to indulge in it. All I can say to this is that I do not consider faith to be a virtue - I consider it to be a sign of intellectual weakness, and a significant barrier to scientific and other progress.

There is no virtue in accepting a thing on faith, since it may well be false, and it is clearly not virtuous to believe the false. Given that one has faith, how does one decide whether to put it in Christianity instead of Hinduism? There is no way; you just have to cross your fingers and take the plunge. Whichever choice you take, you will hear voices in your head, see divine manifestations, and so on, so even once the plunge is taken there is no way to know you are correct.

It has also not escaped my attention that many of the same people who prattle about the virtues of faith like to talk about "proofs" of various things in their religion, such as the resurrection of Jesus. Which is it? Do you have faith, or do you have proof?

Second, there is the rationalization that scientific discovery would become impossible if a continual stream of verifiable miracles were performed. This argument denies the omnipotence of Yahweh. If he can do anything, he can perform a sequence of miracles in such a way as to convince everyone of his existence and not interfere with scientific

discovery at all. The only things he can't do are logical absurdities such as making $2+2=5$.

The point to remember here is that if we don't believe in him, we go to Hell, and this is a greater evil than a lack of the "virtue" of faith or a stunting of science, or anything else conceivable. If Yahweh is concerned about the good, he will do what he can to keep us from Hell, and withholding vital information from us is the exact opposite of this.

Other Charges

The charge against Yahweh of infecting us with disease is particularly strong. God made these micro-organisms, and made us subject to them. If I made a bunch of plague germs and set them loose, you would rightly hold me accountable. Since (according to Genesis) all life and thus all disease comes from Yahweh, I hold him similarly accountable.

A similar consideration arises with respect to the common Christian conception of Satan. This being was created and unleashed by God, who knew exactly what he would do: that is, spend his entire existence wreaking havoc and leading people into criminal activities. Suppose I were to build an evil robot that I knew would go around killing people. Whose fault would it be if I let it loose, mine or the robot's? Whose fault is devilry in the world, the puppet Satan or the being that deliberately created Satan's evil?

Yahweh deliberately acts to restrict man's capability for understanding. I have heard the claim that Yahweh does not restrict us from learning, that he encourages us to learn all we can. Tell it to the workers at the Tower of Babel. In case your memory fails you here, Gen. 11:6-7 says, "'So they are all a single people with a single language!' said Yahweh. 'This is but the start of their undertakings! There will be nothing too hard for them to do. [Horrors! - tim] Come, let us go down and confuse their language on the spot so that they can no longer understand one another.'"

Human Judgment

One of the criticisms most frequently levelled at me when presenting these arguments has been that I have no right to judge God. In the universe model of many Christians, God is the definition of good. All morality proceeds downwards from him, so it makes no sense to apply moral standards to him. From the perspective of man, trying to determine which of the various conflicting belief systems he should abide by, this argument makes no sense.

Assume that there is some religion of an evil god; we'll call this god Satan for convenience. It is clear that adherents of the religion of Satan would see him not as evil, but as good. Someone who is not a member of the religion of Satan might say, "But your god has ordered the slaughter of innocents! How, then, can you say that he is good?" The reply of one of the Satanists is likely to be, "Satan is the source of good; he is good by definition; he is far above us humans; it is thus nonsensical for us to judge him." That's the only way to wriggle off the hook. Slaughtering innocents is obviously

evil, so to save Satan he has to be taken outside the normal standards of good and evil.

Now suppose that the questioner of the previous paragraph is trying to decide which religion to join. He must try to evaluate the various religions available to him; in particular, he will try to avoid falling into the clutches of some religion that worships an evil god or evil spirit. However, no religion says "We are evil; shun us like the plague." All religions claim to be good. So he will have to use some standard to compare the various religions, and this standard has to be independent of any one religion. Otherwise, he couldn't even get started. All religions are best by their own standard.

What standard is available for this necessary comparison? None is really ideal. The best we can do is say that religion is best which causes evil acts in its worshippers least and in which apparently evil acts are not performed by the worshipped being(s). Here he uses the common standard for "evil": theft, murder, rape, terrorism, and so on are held to be evil. He uses this standard because there is none better, and because it is necessary to use some such standard to avoid becoming ensnared by a cult of evil.

If we allow exemptions to any religion, there is no reason not to allow the same exemption to all the others. If we let Yahweh get away with murder, we must let Kali kill as well. This leaves us right back where we started, so we can't make exemptions in any case.

The fact of the matter is that Yahweh and Jesus do not pass this test. There are murder, theft, rape, and terrorism all through their books. Sometimes Yahweh does it; sometimes people do it on Yahweh's orders; sometimes Jesus just sits around gloating on the fate of sinners in the afterlife. It's just not an acceptable religion when you hold it to a moral standard. Furthermore, this unacceptability is manifest in the history of the religion, which is one of holy wars, intolerance, purges, vicious infighting, and general immorality.

Feedback

Some of the responses I have heard to this essay in the past are shown below, with my answers. (Actually, most of the responses I've gotten have been personal attacks and sheer, unadorned sophistry; these are the cream.)

"You can't judge God by the same standards as man." In that case, why is it that I keep getting told that God is good? Are there two meanings of the word "good", one of which forbids murder, deliberate starvation, infecting people with disease, and so on, and another which allows these things? I suggest that there is already a word for the second meaning. That word is "evil".

One particularly curious rationalization here is that "starvation and disease and all the other evils of the world come from breaking God's laws." Starvation comes from not having enough food. Disease comes from exposure to various nasty micro-organisms, and from genetic infirmities. If you can show me how these two things come from breaking God's laws, I will be greatly surprised. Perhaps at the root they are caused by Adam and Eve falling from grace, but you can't hold some starving infant in Namibia

responsible for the actions of two long-dead people, any more than you can hold me responsible for the acts of Jack the Ripper. There just isn't sufficient connection to establish guilt.

"Everything God does is really good, even though we can't always see that it is." There is no possible amount of good that can counterbalance the deliberate, perpetual starvation of the human race. Maybe we Americans have it so good that we can't see this, but most of the people in the world are undernourished. Children are dying by the truckload, not for any sin, but just because there isn't enough food for them. If you could see these children, and you had food, you would give food to them. (Either that, or you are an unfeeling monster.) Not so with the omniscient god you worship. He sees their bellies bloat, sees them run out of nutrients and rot alive, sees their brains dying, and doesn't do a damn thing, despite the fact that he has an unlimited supply of food to give. Another example of his mercy.

Christians have been claiming that there will be wonderful events, that will more than make up for the abominable pain and suffering on Earth, for about two thousand years now. It is clear from the gospels that Jesus thought that it was about to happen shortly after his death. Before the Christians, the Jews and Zoroastrians were saying it. Yet the world still turns as it has, and there is still no reason to think of these claims as other than pipe-dreams to mollify the masses.

"You are fixating on evil and ignoring the good done by Yahweh." A few years ago, there was a man named John Wayne Gacy. He was a good neighbor, a friendly man; he liked to dress up as a clown and bring delight to children's faces. He also abducted, raped, and killed more than a dozen boys, and buried them in his basement. When the jury convicted him, were they failing to take his good side into account? The fact is that murder and rape outweigh any other good that can be done by a being, and proof of these acts is sufficient for conviction of the being, for deciding it is evil. Charles Manson was good to his girls; but that made no difference at his trial for the murder of Sharon Tate, nor should it have.

"Don't ask such questions." People who say this are cowering slaves, beneath my notice. They would as soon serve the devil as god in their blindness and faith. No amount of evidence could convince them that the devil was bad once they had decided to worship him; their basic assumption is that they are correct, so they are untouchable by any rationality.

Conclusion

In closing, let's see how Yahweh/Jesus stands up to his own standards. In Matthew 26:41-46, we hear the King, "Next he will say to those on his left hand, 'Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me.' ... And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life."

Yahweh does not feed the hungry; he does not give drink to those who thirst; he dispenses no clothes, and lets the faithful sicken and die. In the light of this, Yahweh

himself is the worst of sinners; if there is no double standard, he will be at the head of that line into eternal punishment. He is guilty of almost every crime of which he accuses the damned.

I do not believe in the reality of Jehovah, except as a psychological phenomenon, but if I did believe I would not worship that horror. It could send me to the Hell it's made for those it dislikes, and if there were no other choice but worshipping it, I would walk in proudly.

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Facts and Phallacies

by Tim Maroney (1998)

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It is generally agreed that Aleister Crowley's approach to sex magick, and in fact to his religious tradition as a whole, was "phallic." He described it in this way repeatedly and enthusiastically. This might lead us to wonder whether Crowley was sexist, and whether he considered the male sex organs superior to the female, and by extension, the male superior to the female in general.

There has been surprisingly little discussion of this important issue in O.T.O. publications. Recently the Outer Head of the Order, Hymenæus Beta, printed his Address to the Women's Conference¹ in the international newsletter. This Address touched on a broad range of issues related to Crowley's gender attitudes, but it raised more questions than it settled.

The Gender-Neutral Phallus

According to the Address, Crowley's phallicism does not exclude women, because "phallus" is a gender-neutral term. We are told that Crowley was using a woman-inclusive meaning of "phallus" derived from psychology. "Crowley read his Freud and Jung very thoroughly. He didn't use capital P Phallus without assuming that his readers knew what was meant. Unfortunately few today do. He was referring to the psychoanalytic stage of full genital organization, which is the third of a series. The first state is infantile, undifferentiated, and of course generally chaste. The second stage is narcissistic, usually corresponding to adolescence, and masturbatory. In the third, the phallic as they chose to call it, the individual psychology is so organized as to integrate the psyche with the genital consciousness and its associated instincts, and is then prepared to enter the world, to have intercourse."

Freud's psychosexual theory of development differs. The phallic stage in the Freudian model actually is one of the infantile stages, occurs before the age of five (rather than after adolescence), is specifically "phallic" in the sense of the male generative organ (rather than gender-neutral), and occurs years before the final stage of development, which is called "genital" (a gender-neutral term). In Freud's model, first comes the oral

stage, characterized by sucking, biting and swallowing. Second is the anal stage, characterized by toilet training. Third is the phallic stage, about the end of the third or fourth year, characterized by playful self-stimulation, and the formation of the Oedipal complex. During the phallic stage of development comes “penis envy.” In this infamous theory, Freud claimed that the natural course of development is stymied during the phallic stage in girls, and that they blame their mothers for their lack of a phallus. Then the fourth stage, from about five until adolescence, is called the latency period, and finally during adolescence the fifth, “genital” stage sets in, characterized by preparation for marriage.²

It is questionable that Crowley read Freud in depth. His scattered references to Freud touch repeatedly on a few broad themes in no great detail. Crowley refers to the primacy of the sex instinct, to the Oedipus complex, and to the unconscious as a source of dreams and phantasms, and little else.

As for Jung, most of his work was unavailable in English until late in Crowley’s life or after his death. Crowley did read the first English translation of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*³. This book deals extensively with phallic symbolism and the libido, and Crowley refers to it in his commentaries to *The Book of the Law*⁴. Judging by its solar-phallic content, this book may have been a significant influence on Crowley’s thought and his reformation of the O.T.O. However, the book condemns Freud’s theory, and refers to the “phallus” in its traditional male sense. Jung uses the gender-neutral term “libido” to indicate psychic energy⁵ in both men and women, but “phallus” to refer to the male organ and its symbols. A number of symbols of female genitalia are discussed, but none are called “phallic.”

If Crowley had a gender-neutral interpretation of “phallus,” he did not get it from Freud, whose use of the word was gender-specific. Nor could this usage derive from Jung, who was no adherent of Freud’s psychosexual theory, and who also used “phallus” in a gender-specific sense. Scholarly English⁶ and Greek⁷ dictionaries contain no gender-neutral usage of “phallus” from ancient times to the present. It would be anomalous to ascribe this unique usage to Crowley, who from all indications used the word in its traditional sense. If there is any evidence to establish this peculiar reading, it was not presented in the Address.

An interesting view appears in a book found in the curriculum of Crowley’s occult order A.·A.·8, Richard Payne Knight’s *A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus*⁹. Knight applies the now obsolete method of syncretistic comparativism to a variety of phallic and vulvar deities in an attempt to demonstrate that they all express the Neo-Platonic legend of an original hermaphroditic creator God who split into two halves, one male and one female. He alternates in apparent confusion between asserting that the genders of deities are interchangeable since they all symbolize the original creator, and that male deities represent the “active generative power of God” while female deities represent the “passive generative power of earth.” He is more consistent in holding that the differentiated “organs of generation” represent the gender-specific powers. Since he does not use the word “phallus,” Knight could not have been the source of the purported

usage in Crowley.

There are, however, elements of Knight's original hermaphroditism in Crowley, as in Chapter 35 of *The Book of Lies*, "Venus of Milo," which after condemning the female body as "ugly" states, "the Lingam and the Yoni are but diverse developments of One Organ". In the comment to the chapter, though, Crowley is careful to refute any appearance of egalitarianism. Placing the female in a distinctly inferior position, he writes, "the female body becomes beautiful in so far as it approximates to the male. The female is to be regarded as having been separated from the male, in order to reproduce the male in a superior form". His lukewarm, androcentric redaction of Knight's original hermaphroditism does not suggest that the word "phallus" had a gender-neutral meaning to Crowley, or that either Crowley or Knight regarded the two sets of genitals as interchangeable or equivalent.

A gender-neutral phallicism is hard to see in Crowley's work. There is no reference to any woman as in natural possession of a phallus, and he did not believe that women were equal partners with men in sex. In outer writings his explanation of sex magick revolves around the relationship between father and son, and in the human quintessence within the semen.¹⁰ Sometimes a mother and daughter are paired with the father and son; often the father and son stand alone; never are the mother and daughter discussed independently. In *The Star Sapphire* sex magick ritual¹¹, the woman appears only in a bracketed note, and is treated as a tool of the magician, not his partner. The same formula is discernible in the Gnostic Mass, on which more below. In *Liber Aleph* Crowley writes that pre-eminent in all sex magick "is the Formula of the Serpent with the Head of the Lion," the semen, "and all this Magick is wrought by the Radiance and Creative Force thereof."¹² To Crowley the magick is in the man. The woman is a necessary, respected and even consecrated tool of this formula but she is not the source of magick. She is only a magick mirror for the manifestation of the God.

The Matriarchal Æon of Gimbutas

The Address tells us that a matriarchal theory of history expressed by Marija Gimbutas has caught on in academic circles. In fact, though, the consensus view of Gimbutas in her academic field, archæology, rejects her conclusions about a peaceful prepatriarchal society in prehistory. Where the theory has caught on is in the popular mind, because of her popular books on the subject (and those of Riane Eisler¹³), but not in archæology, where it is controversial at best, and more often simply ignored. The model boasts a few scattered advocates in disciplines such as classics and gender studies, but it enjoys only tepid support in any academic field.

Gimbutas does not describe her theory as "matriarchal." On the contrary, she posits an egalitarian matrilineal society, not a matriarchy. "The world of myth was not polarized into male and female... Both principles were manifest side by side. The male divinity in the shape of a young man or male animal appears to affirm and strengthen the forces of the creative and active female. Neither is subordinate to the other; by complementing one another, their power is doubled."¹⁴ She refers to the culture of the period as "a balanced, nonpatriarchal and nonmatriarchal social system."¹⁵ Matriarchy is a feature

of Crowley's Æon of Isis¹⁶ but not of Gimbutas' "gylanic" prehistory.

The Address's account of Gimbutas says that about 1000 to 500 BCE, "2,500 to 3,000 years ago — different from Crowley's 2,000 to 2,500 years [i.e., 500 to 1 BCE], but close enough — she found that an influx of warlike and nomadic Indoeuropean tribes who characteristically worshipped a sky-god moved in and took over." Actually, though, Gimbutas's theory of Kurganization concerns events of 5,500 to 6,000 years ago, in the vicinity of 4000 to 3500 BCE, a difference of three millennia from Crowley's dates.

Dates

Dating discrepancies between Marija Gimbutas, Aleister Crowley and the Women's Conference Address

Crowley's idea of the Æon of Isis was untenable even in the light of the ancient history available in his time. An Æon is supposed to last around two millennia, with flexibility in the start date of roughly 500 years. This puts Crowley's Æon of Isis around 3000 to 2000 BCE for its start, and around 500 to 1 BCE for its end. In "Across the Gulf"¹⁷ he placed its end during the life of his previous prophetic incarnation, Ankh-f-n-Khonsu, in the 26th dynasty of Egypt. This period extends well into written history, and the records and remains of Middle Eastern and European cultures at the time indicate patriarchal political systems. It is hard to see how anyone could think the first 25 Egyptian dynasties were "matriarchal." The latest possible date for the end of the hypothetical prepatriarchal period is around 3000 BCE, an Æon before Crowley's date for the end of the Æon of Isis. In proposing that this period was a matriarchal age, Crowley demonstrated that, as he admitted elsewhere, history was never his subject: "he showed intense repugnance to history."¹⁸ He knew the classical authors and myths, but not the history of the ancient world.

The Address is an example of normal occult history, true to the tradition of Levi, Blavatsky, Crowley, and generations of "Templar" Freemasons. Rather than examining speculative models of history skeptically, it uses mistaken accounts of mainstream sources to bolster those speculations.

Passive But Equal

One of the most contentious issues in current Thelemic discussion is the subject of gender roles in the Gnostic Mass, the central ritual of the O.T.O. Among the questions that are often asked are these. Why do most of the lines, and most of the action, fall to the Priest, with the Priestess relegated to a role that seems secondary? Why is the Lance so much more prominent than the Cup? Why can official O.T.O. Masses feature only men as Priests and only women as Priestesses? Why are all the saints men?

The Address was insulting toward those who believe that Crowley wrote his sexism into the Mass. "I've heard the Mass criticized as sexist, and frankly think that stupid. Who, when the Mass was first introduced into North America during World War I, was worshipping the goddess? Especially in the context of religious ceremony of Western origin? Who understood the divinity of the feminine at all?"

The alternative spirituality movement out of which Thelema arose was replete with female deities, and with female leaders acting as mediators to the divine. The Golden Dawn often named its temples after goddesses, and had so many female members that A. E. Waite and other conservative men felt threatened and tried to limit the leadership to Masons. Spiritualism and Theosophy were led by women. P. B. Randolph and the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor treated women as equal partners with men in sex and sex magic, unlike the male-centered O.T.O. Thomas Lake Harris' sexual mysticism had a great deal to do with his contact with enlightened female spirits. More than a century earlier, Richard Payne Knight had dealt enthusiastically with the erotic rites of various goddesses in his influential book. Crowley himself said that there existed at the time female-led communities of witches (although he criticized them for refusing to have sex with men, or as he preferred to say, "denying to the Holy Spirit the right to indwell His Temple").¹⁹ Even in the mainstream, Catholicism's cult of Mary was in full force. The answer to the question is: Within occultism, nearly everyone was working with the divinity of the feminine in Western ceremonies, except Masons — and even there, at the progressive edge of esoteric Masonry and Co-Masonry. To represent the Gnostic Mass as an advance in gender relations, merely for presenting a sacred female, would be unhistorical.

The presence of a female figure who is treated with deference does not mean that a religious tradition is not sexist. The example of Mary demonstrates this; her prominence hardly makes Catholicism a haven for women's rights. If a ritual indicates that a female character should naturally be subjugated to a man or reduced to stereotypical "feminine" attributes, then her treatment is sexist no matter how high she is placed atop the pedestal (or sat upon the altar).

The practice of staving off an accusation of sexism or racism by pointing to the presence of a member of the oppressed group is known as "tokenism." Is the Priestess being tokenized? We will need to look at her role. Is she presented as naturally subjugated to the Priest? Is she viewed through a veil of stereotype? In the opening the two partners seem roughly equivalent. The Priestess dedicates more time and effort to raising the Priest to his role than he does to raise her to hers, but she really opens the ritual. The ceremony of the Introit belongs to the Priestess, even though it mostly goes to her raising of the Priest. In the central formula, though, the Priest is paramount, performing the critical points VI through VIII nearly solo while the silent, naked Priestess acts only to present this or that tool for his favor, authorize him to reveal her nakedness, and utter with him the word of orgasm once he is ready to shed his sacred blood. As written this seems to be a formula of phallocentricity. The male is the center of the sexual act and woman his functionary, as in other Crowley writings on sex magic.

The Address acknowledges that in the Mass the male "has the largely active role" and the female is passive. In the future there will be an alternative ritual "in which the female takes the more active role and the male the more passive." This seems to be a curious approach to sex. Ordinarily one partner is not active and the other passive.²⁰ Both are active; an unresponsive partner is disliked by all genders and persuasions. It is hard to

understand why the O.T.O. would seek to enshrine this odd formula of activity and passivity in its rituals, except in the context of Crowley's Victorian-era view of sex as a male activity done to women.

If the ritual requires one active officer and one passive officer, rather than an active male and a passive female officer, what need is there for a new ritual? Why not just perform a Mass by the script, with women free to assume the role of the active partner and men free to assume the passive? It is current O.T.O. policy that the Priest must be played by a man and the Priestess by a woman. Does the leadership of the Order assert as policy that there are natural and proper roles for men and women?

Holding out hope of a future, "perhaps not soon," in which these questionable roles are reversed in a new ritual "produced by a woman" where there is still a particular part for the woman and a particular part for the man, does not address concerns about the status of Thelemic women here and now, or about gender stereotyping, or about heterocentrism.

The Gnostic Mass raises another issue, which is the list of saints, all of whom are men. The Address explains that "the Saints are paternal, but this is intentional. It is a list of the small handful of men and man-gods who, in the opinion of the author of the Mass, understood the divinity of woman." No citation of the author, Crowley, to this effect was provided. The short biographies of the saints presented by the O.T.O.²¹ rarely even touch on this theme, and it's hard to see how they could, short of contrivance. What do Hermes, Moses, Priapus, Merlin, François Rabelais, Elias Ashmole, Friedrich Nietzsche, or most of the other Gnostic saints have to do with "understanding the divinity of woman?"

The script of the Mass introduces the saints in a way that makes the intent of the author clear. They were not chosen for their respect for female divinity — they were chosen as the champions of the phallus. Addressing the "Lord of Life and Joy, that art the might of man" — that is, the phallus — Crowley describes the saints as the servants of this Lord, those "that did of old adore thee and manifest thy glory unto men". Women and goddesses are not mentioned, and need not apply. From his description, we could reasonably infer that Crowley wrote an all-male saints list because he believed that the guardians of phallic magick through history had been men.

We are told that "the Order is actively researching female saints; they do not however belong in 'Liber XV'," that is, the Gnostic Mass, the central ritual of the O.T.O. No reason is given, and it does not seem that this addition would deface the Mass. Without disrupting the ritual structure, the "Saints" passage of the Collects could be directed to both Lord and Lady, and male and female saints listed together.

Woman's Sexual Intuition

One of the best-known issues in feminism concerns gender role stereotypes. The traditional social gender ideal holds that there are natural roles for men and women to play in society; and specifically, that men are suited to political, economic, intellectual,

and labor roles, while women are relegated to roles such as mother, sex object, domestic, and vessel of a kind of instinctive natural goodness, as opposed to masculine virtue. Much of feminism has revolved around freeing women, and more recently men, from the artificial restrictions on their wills imposed by these roles, and informed people today are suspicious of casual assertions about the natural role of either gender. There may in fact be inherent psychological differences but the subject requires caution.

The Address repeatedly postulates gender roles harmonious with traditional stereotypes. For example, it refers to “women and the particular powers and aptitudes that you possess.” It implies that men cannot understand women, saying of these female powers and aptitudes that “these were questions that Crowley, as a man, could not introspect.”²² With respect to the whore-goddess Babalon, “women have a particular, natural and intuitive understanding of her nature,” and women have “always had a more direct and immediate understanding of sexual mysteries than men.” The Address postulates separate male and female domains of understanding, and the female domain is intuitive and sexual. If some women are unhappy being limited to a feminine mode of knowing, their concerns are not addressed.

The Address says that male and female sexual response are “radically different.... We [men] usually think of sex as something we do ‘out there’ in the macrocosm, whereas for women it is something that literally occurs inside of you, inside your ego-boundaries, within your microcosm, coming in from without.” This statement ascribes feelings to men in general, but as a man, I do not find this to be an accurate description of my perspective. I think of sex as something I do with someone, in which we are both equally immersed, and which is just as much a challenge to my ego-boundaries as my partner’s. I do not think of it as “something I do ‘out there’,” as if I were acting on a passive, receiving object.

What is it for a woman that is “coming in from without”? There seems to be a familiar confusion between sex and a phallus here. A penis may enter a vagina, but sex does not enter a woman from a man. Sex is already in both partners equally, and each brings what they have to the other.

It is curious that the Address presents heterosexual roles and phallic-vaginal sex as psychologically paradigmatic. How does this analysis apply to men, gay or straight, who are accustomed to sex that “literally occurs inside” their bodies? How does it apply to women who make love in ways that do not involve penetration (or envelopment)? Even if we were to accept the idea that sex involving a penis and a vagina makes one partner passive and the other active, what makes this particular form of sex a prototype for the perspectives of all members of each gender and persuasion?

Concerning the roles proper to the different genders, we are told that “the women of Thelema have much to transmit themselves concerning the two traditionally passive weapons [cup and disk], that they are connected to a source. I don’t think that this will come through the media appropriate to the other weapons, such as writing and talking. I think it will come through inculcating a culture of love and understanding and

responsible action....” An example explains how women will make this contribution: “I have learned most of what I know of magick... from women I have loved. My first great initiatrix did not consciously try to teach anything, and was in fact entirely unconscious of what she had to transmit. She just knew what to do — I say ‘knew’ in that special feminine sense of that attribute of Binah called Intelligence — not the mimicry and language of the Ruach.”

(The Address uses technical language drawn from the Qabalah. Binah is the third sphere of the Tree of Life, symbolized by the Great Mother or Primordial Sea, which is represented in the human psyche by intuition. Its “Intelligence” is not what we normally think of as “intelligent”; that is, it is neither rational nor verbal. Normal intelligence resides in the Ruach, a lower part of the psyche. Above the feminine intuition of Binah is the masculine will of Chokmah.)

This statement reflects a traditional stereotype of women: they have little to contribute with their “writing and talking,” but much to give of their intuition and their wombs. It is difficult to estimate the chilling effect this statement might have on female members who wish to participate with their intellects rather than their genitalia.

Conclusion

The emergence of gender issues into public discourse within the O.T.O. is a sign of progress. While much discussion has gone on behind closed doors or in the spoken word, until the Address was published there was no serious discussion of these issues in the public record. Gender issues are community issues and it is only in public deliberation that change occurs in the community.

Gender studies are intellectually challenging. In any society, gender roles are pillars of the underlying and largely unconscious matrix of assumptions about social righteousness, which the ancient Egyptians called Ma’at. These roles are so deeply ingrained from infancy on that they are often difficult or impossible to understand from within. For this reason, the field demands careful and critical attention. Researchers in the field need to be familiar with established methodologies and paradigms, whether they accept them or not, and they need to pay careful attention to the methodological and historical errors of the past. With proper caution, the field can be very rewarding.

In the popular imagination, the sexist (like the racist) is a mythical beast, easily recognized but now rarely seen. Leaving the popular mind and taking a few steps down the feminist path, the beast appears everywhere, and self-righteousness becomes one’s bosom companion. The budding feminist is secure in the knowledge of personal superiority to the sexist rabble. Just a few steps farther, though, the student comes across a mirror set in the path. The cherished critique wraps around, and we realize that the beast is just as much a part of ourselves as it is part of any other. We are all raised sexist and we all bear assumptions that we may never be able to fully transcend. The path is longer than any of our lives.

Because of this I feel no hesitation in saying that Aleister Crowley was a sexist, any

more than I would hesitate to say that I am a sexist, or any other person. The questions in each case revolve around how sexism manifests in the particular case and what can be done to improve the situation. For me, I do less than I could but more than I might. Crowley is dead and I will leave it to spiritualists to help him. I am more concerned with the here and now. Crowley has left us with a legacy colored by his sexism. We can only improve the situation by facing up to these problems and trying to solve them, not by waving them aside.

Thanks to reviewers Renée Rosen, Donald H. Frew, and others. All errors are the responsibility of the author.

END NOTES

1. The Magical Link, Fall 1997 e.v., pp. 8-10.
2. Sigmund Freud, "Infantile Sexuality", Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud (Modern Library).
3. Transformations and Symbols of the Libido, later shortened to Symbols of Transformation. An English translation was published in 1916 under the title Psychology of the Unconscious.
4. The Law is for All (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon, 1996), p. 147.
5. Symbols of Transformation (Princeton: Bollingen, 1967), p. 135. Jung differs with Freud on the interpretation of "libido," extending it to "psychic energy" which is not necessarily sexual, although it may be.
6. Oxford English Dictionary, second edition, entries "phallic" and "phallus."
7. Liddell-Scott Greek Lexicon, entry "phallos".
8. Magick (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc, 1994), p. 453.
9. Published in 1786. (It is rumored that the publishers were the Friars of Medmenham.)
10. The Book of Lies (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1978), p. 46, "Dewdrops."
11. Ibid., pp. 82-3.
12. Liber Aleph: The Book of Wisdom or Folly (Level Press, 1972?), p. 91, "De Formula Lunæ."
13. The Chalice and the Blade (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), and others.
14. The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe, 7000-3500 B.C. (University of California Press, 1982), p. 237.

15. The Language of the Goddess (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991) p. xx. Emphasis added.

16. Magick (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1994), p. 164.

17. The Equinox, vol. I, no. VII (March 1912), pp. 293-354.

18. The Equinox of the Gods (O.T.O., 1936), p. 44. Crowley is writing of himself in the third person, or J. F. C. Fuller is writing authorized biography.

19. Magick , op. cit., pp. 158-9.

20. The complex issue of willed power exchange is beside the point, as it would be difficult to interpret the Mass as an SM ritual.

21. Tau Apiryon (Sabazius X°) and Soror Helena, Red Flame #2: Mystery of Mystery (Berkeley: O.T.O., 1995), pp. 119ff.

22. Crowley would have differed on this point, asserting that his natural "hermaphroditism" empowered him to understand women from within, as in his Confessions (London: Arkana Books, 1979, p. 45): "The principal effect [of hermaphroditism] has been to enable him to understand the psychology of women, to look at any theory with comprehensive and impartial eyes, and to endow him with maternal instincts on spiritual planes. He has thus been able to beat the women he has met at their own game and emerge from the battle of sex triumphant and scatheless." http://maroney.org/Essays/The_Freedom_of_Doubt.html

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The Freedom of Doubt

by Tim Maroney (1998)

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Today we think of skepticism and religion as necessarily opposed. Religion by its nature promotes dogma, and skeptics are above all else dogma's enemies. Is there a way to reconcile these warring siblings, the doubter and the dogmatist? There may be, but we will have to delve deep into the skeptical way to find it. In contrast to modern "debunking" skepticism, classical skepticism has significant points of contact with mystical ideas of post-rational states of mind, and explains a way to be open to religious ideas and trances without believing in them.

Skepticism uses reasoning to deconstruct reasoning, promising a happy state of suspended judgment known as ataraxia. Parallels to ataraxia include mystical enlightenment, the koans of Zen, the undifferentiated awareness of Yogic samadhi, and the English mystic Aleister Crowley's "crossing the Abyss." Crowley is often interesting due to his attempts to reconcile mysticism with philosophy. I will often refer to him here

because he describes himself as a skeptical mystic.

The Modes and Slogans

Most of our knowledge of classical skepticism comes from the writings of Sextus Empiricus, the second century CE Greek philosopher, whose *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*¹ summarizes an older system founded by Pyrrho. Sextus writes of the difficulty of being certain of the conclusions of philosophy, and explains the "modes of epochê" (eh-pah-KAY), or methods for suspending judgment. Using these modes one discovers equally plausible alternative ways of looking at dogmatic assertions.

Epochê has aged well. Recent philosophical achievements such as Nietzschean post-moral relativism and Gödel's Theorem find ancient counterparts in the modes, and epochê became an important part of phenomenology, a paradigm of importance to twentieth century psychology and anthropology. Its founder, Edmund Husserl, cast epochê as a state "which completely bars me from using any judgment that concerns spatio-temporal existence".²

Sextus gives four lists of modes of epochê . Space permits me to consider only two of the lists (see table 1). The first list gives ten modes. Although the mode of relativity is inconspicuously listed in eighth place, it is the general case of most of the other modes. All things are observed in relation to other things, including relations to their observers, rather than by themselves, and so we can say nothing about how things are in themselves, but only how they appear to be relative to other things.

Associated modes list specific relations between observers and the observed. The first three modes note the role our biological existence has in creating judgments. Animals perceive things differently from species to species, just as the perceptions and interpretations of individual people differ. Sense organs and mental processes produce particular sensations and judgments that conjure only certain relative qualities. We see as red what the dog sees as gray; which is correct? The mode of admixtures notes that our sensations are made up not only of their apparent objects but of the intervening media, the environment, the sense organs, and the intellect.

Some Modes of Epochê (Table 1)

The Ten Older Modes

The Variety of Animals

Differences Among Human Beings

Differences in the Sense Organs

Circumstances

Positions, Distances and Locations

Admixtures

Quantity and Constitution of External Objects

Relativity

Frequency and Infrequency of Occurrence

Ways of Life, Customs and Laws, Mythic Beliefs and Dogmatic Opinions

The Five More Recent Modes

Disagreement
Infinite Regress
Relativity
Hypothesis
Circularity

Other modes note the relativity between observers in different conditions, such as old or young, hungry or sated, moving or still. There are also relativistic effects from distance, position, and rarity. Form or constitution is a relation that creates disagreement in qualities: the same objects have different qualities in different forms, such as sand which appears rough when scattered, but smooth when formed into a dune. Is sand rough or smooth?

The tenth mode, the mode of "ways of life, customs and laws, mythic beliefs and dogmatic opinions," is a principle of moral relativity, undercutting dogmatic ideas of good and evil. Different cultures disagree on the moral value of particular actions, such as eating with the hands or having sex in public. The more we know about other cultures, the less we can be sure that our own moral judgments are inherently correct.

Next comes a list of five more recent modes. The first is disagreement -- when people disagree about a subject, and there seems to be no clear way of resolving the disagreement, we must withhold judgment. The second mode notes the infinite regress created by resting arguments on assumptions. Every argument necessarily has premises, but an argument is needed to justify those premises, but then that argument has premises which themselves require further justification. This creates a logical absurdity, an infinite regress. Therefore, no argument rests on firm ground. The third mode, relativity, is already familiar. The mode of hypothesis notes that escaping from infinite regress by simply accepting premises without question leaves those premises questionable and the conclusion in doubt.

Finally there is the mode of circularity. This refers to the well-known fallacy of the circular form of argument in which premises are validated by the conclusion. For instance, if we were to say that the Book of the Law is true because it says it is true, and since the book is true its claim about its truthfulness could not be false, we would be reasoning in a circle.

If the modes of epochê are the negative face of skepticism, the slogans are the positive (see table 2). "I withhold assent" and "perhaps and perhaps not" are skeptical responses to "dogmatic statements about the non-evident." "Not more (this than that)" means that there seem to be other ways of looking at the situation. And so for the other slogans.

The Skeptical Slogans (Table 2)

"Not more," "nothing more" -- "not more this than that, up nor down"

"Non-assertion" (aphasia)

"Perhaps," "It is possible," "Maybe", "Perhaps, and perhaps not"

"I withhold assent" -- "I am unable to say which of the alternatives I ought to believe and which not"

"I determine nothing" -- "I am now in such a state of mind as to neither affirm or deny dogmatically the matters in question"

"Everything is indeterminate" -- "There seems no reason to prefer any dogmatic opinion to any other"

"Everything is non-apprehensible" -- "All matters of dogmatic inquiry which I have considered seem to me non-apprehensible"

"I am non-apprehensive" or "I do not apprehend"

"To every argument an equal argument is opposed"

The final slogan is "to every argument an equal argument is opposed." This is given two different interpretations. One is that we ought to try to answer every argument with an opposing argument. Another holds that there is for every argument a sort of anti-argument that destroys it. The latter, if carelessly phrased, would be a dogmatic assertion, since we have not yet heard every possible argument and therefore cannot know whether future arguments may prove stronger than those we have examined so far. Nor do we know whether our belief that we have countered any particular argument will continue to seem accurate, since flaws could lurk within our refutations. For that reason Sextus brackets this interpretation of the slogan with modifiers which, although not among the slogans, are just as often repeated: "it seems to me now" and "of those we have so far examined."

This self-referentiality is one of skepticism's strong points. It is not entirely convinced even of its own method, and instead of creating new dogmas -- for instance, that nothing could ever be proven -- it recognizes that its findings are themselves appearances or seemings, subject to change in the future, and based on a less than complete understanding. Belief is transfigured into a non-dogmatic mode, but we are not faced with the impossible task of accepting nothing.

Accepting without Belief

Epochê is sometimes translated as "abstention." Is skepticism an ascetic state of renunciation? What do we do after we have deconstructed all certainty? Should we ignore the aching in our bellies as illusory? David Hume complains that Pyrrhonism would lead to a world where "all human life must perish... and men remain in a total lethargy, till the necessities of nature, unsatisfied, put an end to their miserable existence."³ Sextus, however, says this:

The honey appears to us to be sweet. This we grant, for we sense the sweetness. But whether it is sweet we question insofar as this has to do with the theory, for that theory is not the appearance, but something said about the appearance.... Holding to the appearances, then, we live without beliefs but in accord with the ordinary regimen of life, since we cannot be wholly inactive. ⁴

And later,

We follow without doctrinal belief the common course of life and we say that there are gods, and we reverence gods and ascribe to them foreknowledge....⁵

Despite saying that there are gods, Sextus goes on to refute the most important philosophical and theological theories of deity, and expresses a pagan version of the Problem of Evil: the contradiction between the absolutely good and all-powerful nature of deity and the evil in the world. He does not believe in gods but he says that there are gods. I will return to this important point.

We might ask whether Sextus is pulling back from the import of skepticism. Why do we need to eat, drink, and align ourselves with the mores of society, if these things rest on insupportable theories? They don't; ordinary life rests on appearances. Appearances can be called into question, but we might as well accept them in the ordinary course of events. What compelling reason is there to oppose them? The bizarre life of the ascetic is more likely to result from a dogmatic religious theory rather than the skeptic's abstention from statements about the world in itself.

In the essay "The Soldier and the Hunchback," Crowley arrives at a similar conclusion when asking how anything shall stand before the destructiveness of skepticism: "Well, one of the buttresses is just the small matter of common sense." He goes on to explain that although it cannot be proved that his friend Dorothy and her sausage sandwiches even exist, "it's the taste I like."⁶ "Why not be a clean-living Irish gentleman, even if you do have insane ideas about the universe?"⁷

Ataraxia and Enlightenment

Skepticism does not force us to ignore the world around us or to adopt an ascetic way of life. What, then, are these modes and slogans for? They are said to create *aporia*, a desirable state of bemusement. The intellect is dumbstruck before a wealth of contradictory ideas. By cultivating *aporia*, holds Sextus, one can attain *ataraxia*, a state of happiness caused by ceasing to ascribe good or evil values to phenomena.

Is *ataraxia* a "mystical" goal? That is a matter of definition. It is psychological, not supernatural, but it is targeted at an improvement of the inner life of humanity through mental discipline. The teaching that *aporia* leads to *ataraxia* resembles a religious doctrine. Sextus' insistence on the efficacy of the skeptical method in creating happiness may seem to be a weak point in his presentation. Generally he is careful to be skeptical even about skepticism, rarely insisting on the permanence of any assertion or conclusion. Casting skepticism as a way of life with dramatic results in creating personal happiness is uncharacteristically sweeping, perhaps even dogmatic.

One can easily draw parallels between this doctrine and the Buddhist idea of escaping sorrow by detachment from the judgment of conditions as desirable or undesirable. It could also be compared with Crowley's idea of achieving "true wisdom and perfect happiness" by opposing each idea with its contradiction. While each of these doctrines has unique features and it would be a mistake to draw a simplistic equation between them, they have a common thread, an attempt to free the mind of preconceived values

by breeding alternative perspectives and loosening rigid value judgments. The result is a type of happy wisdom. This accomplishment, variously called ataraxia, enlightenment, or "exalted degree," cures the disease of dogmatic judgment.

Like any religious doctrine, this one is susceptible to skeptical questions. How do we know that ataraxia exists? Is it permanent or transitory? Does the method of aporia work for everyone? Is ataraxia an achievement or a preexisting personality type? Is the description of the experience accurate? Under what system of values is the state praiseworthy? Since ataraxia seems to be an object of adoration, might its adorer have exaggerated its attributes? If I poke you in the eye with a stick, will you not still cry, enlightened one? Sextus has answers to some of these questions, much as Buddhists do in the Questions of King Milinda, but they are not always convincing in either case.

Crowley's skeptico-mystical text "Liber Os Abysmi vel Da'ath"⁸, describes a philosophical practice purported to lead to a transcendence of rationality, or as Crowley liked to say, "crossing the Abyss."

Let the Exempt Adept procure the Prolegomena of Kant, and study it, paying special attention to the Antinomies. Also Hume's doctrine of Causality in his "Enquiry."... Also Huxley's Essays on Hume and Berkeley... [Etc.] Now let him consider special problems, such as the Origin of the World, the Origin of Evil, Infinity, the Absolute, the Ego and the non-Ego, Freewill and Destiny, and such others as may attract him. Let him subtly and exactly demonstrate the fallacies of every known solution, and let him seek a true solution by his right Ingenium.

Such a skewering of all known philosophies is just what Sextus accomplished in his day with the modes of epochê. Crowley, unlike Sextus, seems to be saying that the mystic should seek new solutions, but the seeker is being set up for failure:

Let then his reason hurl itself again and again against the blank wall of mystery which will confront him.... Then will all phenomena which present themselves to him appear meaningless and disconnected, and his own Ego will break up into a series of impressions having no relation one with the other, or with any other thing... [His state of insanity] may end in ... his rebirth into his own body and mind with the simplicity of a little child. And then shall he find all his faculties unimpaired, yet cleansed in a manner ineffable.... Hath he not attained to Understanding?

Flowery language aside, having thoroughly experienced the futility of philosophical reasoning, the mystic has been freed from its grip.

The Hindu mantra "neti, neti" ("not this, not this"), which denies the accuracy of perceptions and judgments, is directly negative rather than skeptically detached, but it is similar to withholding assent. Samadhi in Hindu Yoga is the mystical trance of the reconciliation of opposites, or non-duality. Crowley recommends a method of inducing samadhi by conjoining each thought with its contradiction. In The Book of Lies he explains that the meditator "enters into his Samadhi, and he piles contradiction upon contradiction, and thus a higher degree of rapture, with every sentence, until his armoury is exhausted, and... he enters the supreme state."⁹ His method recalls the final

skeptical slogan, "to every argument an equal argument is opposed." This is a persistent theme of The Book of Lies, and its clearest point of contact with skepticism comes in chapter 45, entitled "Chinese Music". I note in [brackets] some parallels with the modes of epochê:

Proof is only possible in mathematics, and mathematics is only a matter of arbitrary conventions. [The mode of hypothesis.]

"White is white" is the lash of the overseer; "white is black" is the watchword of the slave. The Master takes no heed. [The mode of conditions.]

The Chinese cannot help thinking that the octave has 5 notes. [The mode of ways of life, customs and laws.]

The more necessary anything appears to my mind, the more certain it is that I only assert a limitation.

He says in a commentary that in the latter two sentences, "we find a most important statement, a practical aspect of the fact that all truth is relative," the mode of relativity.

The chapter closes with one of Crowley's more recognizable quotes:

I slept with Faith, and found a corpse in my arms on awaking; I drank and danced all night with Doubt, and found her a virgin in the morning.

He comments that "we see how skepticism keeps the mind fresh, whereas faith dies in the very sleep that it induces." Skepticism is presented as a meditative discipline, a vivid spiritual deconstruction of normal modes of belief.

Skepticism in its mystical mode is a quest for a trans-rational state which does not shut out rationality but multiplies thought into a broad and unfettered symphony, without investing any one thought with too much seriousness. While this might not make a poke in the eye any more pleasant, it could provide both aesthetic reward and a buffer against unpleasant thoughts and sensations. The benefits of ataraxia may be exaggerated, but Sextus's report of a happy result from aporia may yet refer to some real and useful mental state.

Skepticism and Religious Dogma

It is surprising to find common ground between skepticism and religion because religion seems intrinsically dogmatic. Its dubious assertions fall readily before the skeptical scythe. The religious sometimes respond that their beliefs are not dogmatic but experiential. This fails to justify dogmatic interpretations of experiences, though. For instance, it may well be that someone has the experience of conversing with Jesus, but that does not prove the theory that Jesus exists. Similarly, though the trance of samadhi may occur, that does not demonstrate that samadhi redeems us in the next world.

Vivekananda, the well-known Indian mystic (1863-1902), wrote that rationality can serve as a guardian for the mystic.

Stick to your reason until you reach something higher; and you will know it to be higher because it will not jar with reason. The stage beyond consciousness is inspiration (samadhi)... There is no external test for inspiration; we know it ourselves. Our guard against mistake is negative: the voice of reason. All religion means going beyond reason; but reason is the only guide to get there.¹⁰

In ancient India there was a philosophical movement called Cârvăka or Lokâyata, a form of materialism resembling Pyrrhonism in important ways, and much disliked by the religious. Unfortunately this movement's own writings have not survived, but we do possess responses to Cârvăka philosophy in the writings of its many opponents. The Cârvăkas deny the reality and transmigration of the self and the possibility of salvation in another world, which are pillars of mainstream Indian philosophy. These skeptics admit only perception as a mode of knowledge, much as Pyrrhonists accept only appearances. But is samadhi a perception? It seems it must be. A trance is a state of mind, and so it is perceived; it has an appearance and so it can be known.

Did the Cârvăkas accept trances while denying that they involved the invisible soul or âtman, or provided otherworldly redemption? So it would appear from the account of Gunaratna 11, who tells us that the hedonistic Cârvăkas "carry human skulls, smear their bodies with ashes and practice yoga." These skeptical yogins disagree with the conventional sâdhus or holy men who seek redemption through meditation, but they do not deny that they attain pleasure through meditation; they say simply that meditation has no purpose, that "dharma is not superior to kâma," that is, that meditation is no better than the pleasure of the body.

To consider another form of skeptical mysticism, Crowley's essay "The Soldier and the Hunchback" says that we should not waver from asking any reasonable question, but once we have done so we will find the questions turning into answers as we climb the spiritual ladder. Employing the (awkward) metaphor of question marks as hunchbacks and exclamation points as soldiers, he says:

It takes a moment for a hunchback to kill his man, and the farther we get from our base the longer he takes. You may crumble to ashes the dream-world of a boy, as it were, between your fingers; but before you can bring the physical universe tumbling about a man's ears he requires to drill his hunchbacks so devilish well that they are terribly like soldiers themselves. And a question capable of shaking the consciousness of Samadhi could, I imagine, give long odds to one of Frederick's grenadiers.¹²

As Crowley implies, it seems likely that the average skeptic does acquire some belief in the power of the tools of questioning. However, he goes too far in trying to cast the modes of epochê as positives: a question is only a question. Crowley makes two mistakes. First, he believes without question in the theological model often known as the Great Chain of Being (though he does not call it that) by which existence is ordered from the most to the least sacred. Crowley's Qabalistic ladder stretches from the hellish Qliphoth through the fields we know up to the ultimate Kether of Yetzirah and the Veils of Negative Existence. This model is a cosmological dogma and it is easily thrown into doubt by simple application of the modes of epochê. Without the ladder, there is no

basis for believing in a transformation of questions as we climb.

Second, Crowley is emotionally driven to find a way out of questioning and into certainty, while the Pyrrhonist sees questioning as a pleasant state sufficient unto itself. Again and again in the essay he expresses his desire that questions marks should turn into exclamation points: "we may now resume our attempt to drill our hunchback into a presentable soldier," "wouldn't it be jolly if our own second ? suddenly straightened its back and threw its chest out and marched off as ! ?", and so on. Elsewhere he says that "doubt is a good servant but a bad master"¹³. He wants to have absolute conviction in a religious system yet still be a skeptic.

This desire for certainty led him to create a dogmatic religious system. The definition of his magical order A. . . A. . . contains this belief requirement:

All members must of necessity work in accordance with the facts of Nature... So must all Members of the A. . . A. . . work by the Magical Formula of the Æon. They must accept the Book of the Law as the Word and the Letter of Truth, and the sole Rule of Life. They must acknowledge the Authority of the Beast 666 and of the Scarlet Woman as in the book it is defined, and accept Their Will as concentrating the Will of our Whole Order. They must accept the Crowned and Conquering Child as the Lord of the Æon, and exert themselves to establish His reign upon Earth. They must acknowledge that "The Word of the Law is Thelema" and that "Love is the law, love under will."¹⁴

A skeptic would respond simply "maybe, and maybe not."

Despite his skeptical meditation practice, Crowley believed that his particular religious doctrine was an absolute truth and that it was merely a mistake to disagree with it. We can also easily find evidence of dogmatism in Buddhism and Hinduism, despite their elements of skepticism. Dogmatism is tempting. There seems to be something in us that draws us toward conviction in the non-evident. Even Sextus seems to have a system of thought that rests on the non-evident proposition that aporia leads to ataraxia. We find a comfort in certainty and an anxiety in doubt, and so we love systems of religion and philosophy. Their self-assured dogmas give us a feeling of place in the universe and of participation in an overarching order.

Should we resist this tendency? Is Sextus wrong in maintaining that suspension of judgment will make us happy? Do we need to be certain of things? Is this need so strong that it can justify holding mistaken beliefs, such as the belief that God lives in the sky, or that diseases are caused by malevolent spirits, or that Buddha remembered all his millions of past lives, or that Vishnu was born as a fish, or that our courses on earth have been foreordained by the True Will? Shall we simply accept that credulity is necessary to our happiness and forget that our pet dogmas are probably false?

The answer is a matter of degrees. We might not believe that Vishnu had ever been born as a fish, but we could find some wisdom in the story of this scaly avatar, as we might in any fiction, and so our reaction to the story could be accepting while not believing. We know from Kuhn that science is an unreliable social process, but still we

accept galaxies and molecules. There are many degrees of belief and many types of acceptance. To be a dogmatist is not simply to act as if any statement has value but to insist that some non-evident insistence about the world is definitely and lastingly true.

The ancients knew that affirming the value of a myth does not require affirming its accuracy. Plutarch, for example, insists on a nonliteral but positive interpretation of Egyptian myth: "We must not treat legend as if it were history at all, but we should adopt that which is appropriate in each legend in accordance with its verisimilitude,"¹⁵ that is, symbolically, in the way that myth resembles the world. Perhaps this non-literalistic affirmation is what Crowley meant by his apparently dogmatic A. . . A. . . belief requirement? Perhaps we must be willing to act as if these myths were true, even though we do not believe in them? Unfortunately, no. In a footnote to the passage above, he addresses the conflict between freedom of thought and doctrinal mandate:

This is not in contradiction with the absolute right of every person to do his own true Will. But any True Will is of necessity in harmony with the facts of Existence; and to refuse to accept the Book of the Law is to create a conflict within Nature, as if a physicist insisted on using an incorrect formula of mechanics as the basis of an experiment.

This is an exhortation to literal belief, not deliteralized mythic engagement. It is a fact of Nature that the Book of the Law is the scripture appointed for humanity in this *Æon*. No skeptics need apply.

In Crowley's other magical order, the Ordo Templi Orientis, applicants to the first degree of initiation sign a form affirming that they accept the Book of the Law. This is a modern requirement dating only from the late 1970's and early 1980's.¹⁶ Because of the use of the term "accept," the form may derive from the A. . . A. . . passage above, but it has a more liberal interpretation -- it is taken to mean only that the applicant does not wish to publish a changed edition, which is a peculiar reading of "acceptance" of scripture. The fact that the acceptance requirement has been reinterpreted is interesting. It shows that the current membership is less comfortable with dogmatism than Crowley was, and is willing to make space for deliteralized but still positive interpretations of scripture. Today's membership rebels at aspects of Crowley's dogmatism.

This liberal reinterpretation is a work in progress. While a bald dogmatic statement requiring belief in a particular book is unpalatable today, other pillars of Crowley's system are still widely granted the status of fact by his followers. The two most prominent dogmas are True Will and the procession of the *Æons*.¹⁷ Neither of these primary dogmas are viewed simply as myths or fictions; instead they are regularly asserted as fact. Yet neither one is well supported by evidence or argument, nor are they phenomenological truths like the experience of samadhi. They are believed on faith. As myths their value is beyond skepticism's power, but as assertions of truth they are vulnerable to the modes of epochê.

Sextus' observation of the skeptical attitude toward gods -- to accept their traditional attributes and yet withhold belief -- shows one way out of this dilemma. We need not

condemn the ideas of the *Æons* or of True Will; we need only to "bracket" them (in Husserl's phrase), to place them within their context where they can provide spiritual sustenance without degenerating into dogma. Skeptics within a mystical or magical tradition are free to frame its myths as the fictions they are. Doubt is not a constraint -- it does not forbid us from exploring the beauties of the spirit, as some modern-day "skeptics" believe. Instead, skepticism frees us to plunge into the profound depths of myth and trance, without concern that we will be blinded by their wonders.

Notes:

1. I have relied throughout on the recent critical edition of Benson Mates, *The Skeptical Way* (Oxford University Press, 1996). I have also consulted the Loeb edition.
2. Joseph J. Kockelmans, ed., *Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Its Interpretation* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1967), pp. 77-8; see also Daniel C. Dennett, *Consciousness Explained* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1991), p. 44.
3. David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, 1748. *Harvard Classics* (New York: Collier, 1910), vol. 37, sec. XII, p. 416.
4. Mates, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
6. Aleister Crowley, "The Soldier and the Hunchback", *The Equinox*, Vol. I, No. I, March 1909, pp. 122-3.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
8. *The Equinox*, Vol. I, No. VII, March 1912, pp. 77-81.
9. Aleister Crowley, *The Book of Lies* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1978), cap. 11, p.33. Also see caps. 31 and 39. Orig. 1913.
10. Vivekananda, *The Yogas and Other Works* (New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekanda Center, 1953), p. 546. From the "Inspired Talks," 1895.
11. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, ed., *Cârâvâka/Lokâyata : An Anthology of Source Materials and Some Recent Studies* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 1990), pp. 266-78. I am indebted to Mordecai Shapiro for referring me to Indian skepticism.
12. "The Soldier and the Hunchback", p. 128.
13. *The Book of Lies*, ch. 45, p. 100.
14. Aleister Crowley, *Magick in Theory and Practice*, app. II, pp. 240-1.

15. Plutarch, Isis and Osiris, 374E; F. C. Babbitt, tr., Moralia (Harvard University Press, 1936), p.139.

16. Personal e-mail from Bill Heidrick, September 8 and 9, 1998. "It's mainly from Grady [McMurtry]'s time, with some minor variations in language since. Gross and deliberate misquotes from Liber AL had appeared in print (e.g., in a Level Press unauthorized edition of Liber Aleph and other places). The original reason for the requirement was to conserve the text without such alteration."

17. There are also other prominent but less central dogmas, such as the accuracy of the Tree of Life model of the universe as interpreted by Crowley and the Golden Dawn; the reality of reincarnation, chakras, Secret Chiefs, and incorporeal spirit beings; the ancient descent and unique power of a particular sex magick formula; and the efficacy of thaumaturgy, divination, numerology, astrology and initiation. Skeptical questions about these dogmas are not frequently raised in the Thelemic community. I hope to address some of them in detail in future columns.

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Healing the Spiritual Community

by Tim Maroney (1994)

Community is an increasingly popular ideal. For many people, spiritual communities provide healing, support and other vital needs. However, community has a dark side: it does not always heal, but hurts. The profusion of books and articles lauding community virtually ignore its negative effects. One recent volume brushes aside all concerns as "fears of intimacy and commitment" and "the illusion that humans are separate", magnanimously enjoining the reader to "forgive yourself if you have fallen into either of these illusions."^[1]

The goal of this article is not to downplay the real benefits of community, but to fill in parts of the puzzle that are omitted by its advocates. Some common sources of problems will be discussed, then practical solutions will be proposed.

Negative Images of the Self

People seek spiritual escapes from a feeling of inner wrongness, unworthiness or confusion. As a result, low self esteem is common in spiritual communities. As Roy F. Baumeister observes:

Escaping the self is centrally important in spiritual exercise. Religious disciplines from all over the world differ radically from each other in fundamental doctrines, techniques, promised results, and theoretical context, but all tend to agree on the importance of shedding the self. We shall see this message repeated over and over: the self is a barrier to spiritual advancement.^[2]

Spirituality is attractive to those who search for release from a negative self-image because it explicitly states the unworthiness of the self and offers the promise of a remedy.

A negative self-image can cause social problems by creating unbalanced cravings for approval, guidance, power, sexual validation, and so on. Sometimes it is a realistic engagement of personal problems, but it often lends itself to self-destructive attitudes and behavior.

People who do not like themselves often imagine that they are under attack, externalizing their internal struggles. For instance, such a person might hear an inquiry about their opinion on some subject as an accusation of ignorance. They imagine that other people view them as negatively as they view themselves. Because of their tendency to see attack everywhere, people with low self-esteem are also prone to jealousy and resentment. Another person's success or happiness may be seen as a backhanded slap. Well-meaning people can find themselves at the center of all sorts of conflicts in spiritual communities if they do not step lightly in this minefield of imaginary insults.

Inner attacks are also externalized in another way: "many people with low self-esteem are critical of everyone"[3]. People who dislike themselves also tend to have low opinions of others. Negative judgments of character are a common source of problems in spiritual groups.

One way to escape the self is to become someone else. By creating alternate personae, it is possible to withdraw from a painful self-consciousness. Baumeister documents this tactic in suicidal personalities and sexual submissives[4]. In religion, people answer to different names and adopt different styles of clothing to take them away from their outside selves. Members of magical communities often play fantasy role-playing games and participate in historical re-enactments. For some people, these activities are harmless diversions, while for others they act out a desire to escape.

People sometimes join a group because they feel themselves lacking in some quality and want the group to make up that lack. This can lead to a contradiction: the ideals of a spiritual community may be the opposite of the personalities of its members. A "compassion" group may be insensitive and judgmental; a "kinship" group may seem like a dysfunctional family; a "free love" group may be wracked by jealous discord; a "free-thinking" group may be doctrinally rigid; and so on. The group ideal is most attractive to the people who are least able to live up to it!

Two Kinds of Trust

Spiritual groups often praise trust as a fundamental virtue, but trust does not come easily to people. Deep trust consists of freedom from artifice, sham and pretense: an opening and unfolding of the inner self. Its ultimate form is enlightenment, where one exposes one's heart to the universe without shame or fear. All veils and illusions are dissolved, and all barriers are lowered. Even short of this great spiritual awakening, we

may drop all the barriers that we are able to let go of in the presence of people we esteem - that too is deep trust.

Actors on the stage have a different kind of trust. They know that the other actors will behave a certain way, according to their agreed-upon roles. This is not deep trust, but comfortable distance and predictability. It is the knowledge that no barriers will be challenged. Playing a role can reduce inhibitions[5] and so it can be positive. To reveal themselves at all, people with low self esteem need to know that they will be judged favorably. To have confidence in others, one must have confidence in oneself; if our own feelings about ourselves are negative, we assume that others will feel the same. In a support group, everyone can be trusted to play a supportive role.

The trust of actors can lead over time to deep trust. People gradually lower their barriers through prolonged role-playing. By skirting around the periphery of another person for a while, one may see that the other is safe in some regard, and relax - not completely, but by a small, measured amount. Seeing that the first person lowered their barriers a little, the other may reciprocate; and so it goes. This slow, piecewise removal of character armor may play out over years.

Some people are impatient with this process, and shed their defenses before others are ready to see them naked. People jump headlong into deep trust for several reasons. They may see through pretense, so they are exasperated by artifice - they can't understand why people maintain their façades. People with low self esteem may find the effort of maintaining their rigid defenses exhausting, motivating them to spring at any chance to relax. Some people know the spiritual value of lowered barriers from personal mystical experience and expect the same in group workings.

Many conflicts in spiritual communities result from confusing these two kinds of trust. The esteem in which groups hold the principle of trust can create the impression that members are supposed to proceed directly to deep trust and skip the preliminary stages. However, they are actually supposed to act out a role which simulates deep trust. Failing to realize the unspoken boundaries of the game can lead to disaster! Even when someone is willing to trust others, it takes time for them to respond in kind. As Nietzsche wrote:

Thou wouldst wear no raiment before thy friend? It is in honour of thy friend that thou showest thyself to him as thou art? But he wishes thee to the devil on that account!

He who maketh no secret of himself shocketh: so much reason have ye to fear nakedness! Aye, if ye were gods, ye could then be ashamed to wear clothing![6]

Humans are role-playing animals. Most art involves some sort of artificiality, and any group project requires the adoption of roles. In an enlightened society, people would still act, but they would act consciously and playfully, without an intent to deceive others or themselves. In today's society, those who are skilled at role-playing are accepted, while those who wear their hearts on their sleeves are scorned. There may come a day when

deep trust is the rule rather than the exception, but for now, it is precious and rare. Spreading it freely causes resentment, especially among people with low self esteem. The world would be better if more people opened their hearts, but anyone who expects openness to make them popular may be disappointed.

Judgments of Character

Initiatory groups and similar assemblies apply a model of spiritual progress in which the member is "brought to light" by successive degrees. In some cases the degrees are informal, while in others they are highly structured. In either case, those who have attained higher degree are responsible for judging the progress of those of lower degree, and admitting them to the next level when they are deemed ready. The focus is ostensibly on the spiritual progress of the initiate, but as Jean La Fontaine observes:

The transformation of individuals, by the ritual which transfers them from one social state to another, ... supports the position of those in authority, the officiants, whether these are secret-society officials or traditional leaders. The individuals are, to this extent, objects used in the ritual, rather than its central focus through which the ritual is to be explained. Initiation rituals cannot be understood simply as a means of changing the status of individuals.

Failure to recognize that initiation rituals are `for' those already initiated, as much as for the novices, ... has been a handicap in analysis.[7]

In spiritual communities, the process of judgment has as much to do with the judges as with the people they judge. The judges gain a feeling of power and superiority from their role. Whatever the legitimate function of judgment in the spiritual path, these rewards also create a motivation to judge, which can be satisfied as easily by a false judgment as a true one - perhaps more so, since a false judgment is a greater manifestation of power. Conversely, novices who seek guidance in order to submit, to compensate for low self esteem, or to vicariously wield power will be happy with misguided assessments of their character.

Psychotherapists are supposed to be disinterested: they are not in a position of power over, nor socially involved with, their clients, and this removes much of the potential for conflicts of interest. A similar ideal holds in jurisprudence: judges are expected to recuse themselves from cases in which they have a personal interest. Therapy and the courts sometimes fall short of this ideal, but spiritual communities constantly defy it. The people placed in judgment over the aspirant are often competing with them for social resources such as power, approval and sex.

The issue of judgment is further complicated by the use of questionable methods, such as telepathy, numerology and astrology[8]; chiding and moralistic concepts such as "worthiness" and "ignorance"; lack of psychological training and disdain for psychotherapy as a competitive belief system; the usual thirst for certainty among the religious; a compensatory desire to judge in those who have been judged themselves; and the quickness of people with low self esteem to form negative judgments. Given all

these factors, it is not surprising that so many conflicts in spiritual groups involve wild accusations about others' personalities and motives.

Even outside religion, we often impute motives to others for self-interested reasons rather than in a sincere attempt to understand their psychology. Nietzsche expressed one mode of judgment succinctly:

What really are our reactions to the behaviour of someone in our presence? First of all, we see what there is in it for us - we regard it only from this point of view. We take the effect as the intention behind the behaviour - and finally we ascribe the harbouring of such intentions as a permanent quality of the person whose behavior we are observing and thenceforth call him, for instance, 'a harmful person'. Threefold error! Threefold primeval blunder![9]

Politics provides an example. In any country, it is considered polite to gloss over the less admirable areas of national history. People who decline to participate in this selective blindness are accused of doing so for reasons of *schadenfreude*, taking pleasure in the pain of others. Yet the dissidents themselves feel that they are concerned with historical accuracy and compassion for the victims of policy. The researches of dissidents threaten the regard in which citizens prefer to hold their country, causing a painful feeling of shared guilt instead of the usual national pride - so the offended citizen concludes that the purpose of dissidence is to spoil their pleasure: that dissidents are driven by malice.

The same mode of judgment is common in spiritual groups. The consequences of people's actions are confused for their motivations. People who ask difficult questions about the group's belief system are assumed to be doing so, not out of real philosophical interest, but to undermine "the truth". People whose ideas or behavior seem to threaten goals for the group are not thought of as having different goals, but as saboteurs bent on destruction.

In order to communicate, we constantly construct models of the minds of those around us. Judgment is not bad in itself, but we should know that our judgments are often incorrect, and we should be skeptical of them. A good therapist is less certain about a client's mind after a year of therapy than a typical spiritual guide is after a month. The therapist's training has demonstrated the difficulty of psychological judgment, while the guide is powerfully motivated to judge.

Judgment of character in spiritual groups usually has more to do with a game of dominance and submission than with analysis of personality. The more self-knowledge an aspirant may have, the less accurate the facile judgments of the guides will seem. Disagreement is a sure recipe for exclusion.

The Functions of Belief

A persistent theme in the twentieth century has been the crisis of values. The subject appears in psychology, literary criticism, sociology, and philosophy time and again. We

no longer accept the inherited values of our culture; they are impossible to square with modern understandings. We see customs as natural phenomena without intrinsic meaning rather than as guides for our lives. No general defining value system has emerged to remove the resulting feeling of anxiety.

Spiritual beliefs fill this gap by providing a context for meaning and feeling in our lives. Their certainty acts as a defense against insecurity. In group dynamics, the truth or falsehood of spiritual beliefs matters little: what is important is that they remove anxiety and promote conviction. Challenges to such beliefs may be viewed as malicious attempts to restore the previous state of anxiety and emptiness, provoking a defensive reaction.

The one-sidedly positive view of community discussed at the start of this article demonstrates another aspect of the process. People tend to be more concerned with the imagined results of words than with their accuracy. If one has decided to support a cause, then one becomes an advocate, brushing aside criticism and focusing on positive attributes. It's not that criticism is necessarily false, one thinks, but an open discussion of problems might hurt morale and discourage converts. This unrelenting boosterism makes it difficult to address real problems.

Not only do spiritual beliefs fill a void, they are often defenses against reality. Baumeister shows how escape from the self involves flights into irrationality and fantasy as a way of diverting the focus of consciousness from meaningful material.[10] The more bizarre the beliefs, the better they distract attention from an unpleasant complex of realistic, though perhaps inaccurate, meanings. Eric Hoffer notes this connection between faith and low self esteem:

Faith in a holy cause is to a considerable extent a substitute for the lost faith in ourselves.

The less justified a man is in claiming excellence for himself, the more ready he is to claim all excellence for his nation, his religion, his race or his holy cause.[11]

When substitution motivates spiritual belief, defensive reactions against perceived challenges to the belief system may take extreme, irrational, even violent forms. Aside from such severe reactions, groups dull critical thinking by an automatic process known as "groupthink". The psychologist Irving L. Janis wrote that "Groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures." [12] Janis developed the idea of groupthink in reference to political fiascos such as the Bay of Pigs, but it applies equally well to spiritual communities. The process was summarized by Jeffrey S. Victor:

Groupthink can be seen to operate in religious groups, therapy groups, and even corporate bureaucracies, in which the need to maintain cooperative interaction between members creates a pressure to conform. These in turn suppress questioning, skepticism, and dispute about prevailing beliefs. The desire of participants to preserve

friendly relationships among themselves inhibits their expressing points of view that deviate from informally accepted group norms. Participants who attempt to bring issues that might cause internal bickering and conflict are subtly chastised for their disloyalty, or they are ostracised. The process works upon individual perceptions of reality. Members who might privately consider some beliefs unacceptable begin to doubt their own thinking and change their beliefs to fit into the reality constructed by the group.[13]

Because of all these pressures, it may make little difference whether a spiritual community defines itself as open, tolerant, and non-dogmatic. The anxiety associated with an absence of defining beliefs, the position of advocacy, and the conformist pressures of groupthink act together to suppress questions about the central tenets of the group. The lack of a formalized system of dogma is no guarantee of pluralism. Informality can create the false impression that all of the members independently arrived at the same ideas, even though the ideas may be bizarre. This apparent voluntarism, the seeming like-mindedness of the membership, offers dissenters a choice: either accept the system, or realize that you don't belong here.

People decline to go along with formal and informal dogmas for a variety of reasons. Some reasons reflect well on dissenters (philosophical curiosity and fearlessness, the desire to repair problems) while some reflect badly (obnoxious nay-saying, acting out martyrdom scenarios) but the result is generally the same. People who don't go along with the unbalanced advocacy that is the hallmark of spiritual communities find themselves treated as threats.

Twelve Goals People Have in Groups

Comfort: To feel at ease, relaxed, secure: a "coming home" feeling.

Approval: To get approval from others; to be part of a support group.

Education: To acquire and improve skills and knowledge; to get training in methods and access to information.

Cooperation: To accomplish more than what a single person can do alone; to practice and get feedback.

Friendship: To make friends.

Sex: To find sexual partners.

Contact: To get physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual contact.

Drama: To get stimulation and excitement, even conflict and tension.

Giving: To share skills or expertise; to give time and energy to a cause.

Power: To achieve status, as opposed to mere acceptance. Many people want power,

but are content with wielding it vicariously by identifying with their leaders.

Guidance: To get outside direction and guidance, as opposed to education. This often appears together with the desire for power: many devotees dream of assuming the guru's role someday!

Healing: To fix something that is wrong; to get salvation, initiation, or some other spiritual cure for a real or imaginary ailment.

In addition to these common goals, people often join groups to act out a scenario in which they take on a particular role which they enjoy, which flatters their self-image, or which satisfies some other need. Some typical roles are guru, chela, teacher, student, scholar, sage, maverick, priest(ess), judge, initiate, therapist, healer, oracle, soldier, warrior, activist, social manager, tortured artist, life of the party, and sacred prostitute.

Conflicts of Goals

Conflicts of goals are more common sources of strife than "personality conflicts". Even when two people rub each other the wrong way, they are likely to come to some kind of truce as long as they believe they share the same goals.

The possibilities for conflict of goals are immense. Consider the twelve goals identified above (see box, page [*]). There are cases in which any one of them could conflict with any other. For instance, one person's desire for approval could conflict with another's desire for education - the first would try to make the community a support group, the other a classroom.

Conflicts are especially likely when people actively disparage certain goals. Lone wolves may look down on the desire for approval; married people and celibates may scorn those who search for sex partners; and so on. In fact, all twelve goals are natural human drives, and none deserves to be treated with contempt. Even the desire for power may be a manifestation of the desire for cooperation - perhaps someone who truly has vision should seek a leadership role. Failure to respect others' goals is part of the general problem of facile judgment, already discussed.

Some goals foster conflict by themselves. There is no drama without conflict, and the desire for drama can create melodrama. If struggle can be focused against obstacles such as the lack of funds or the difficulty of projects, then the desire for drama may form a positive part of a group, but if it is directed into the social sphere it is likely to cause problems.

Sex can be a very positive part of human life, but when several people fish in the same sea of potential partners, jealous conflicts are inevitable.

Power is especially problematic. This goal may be gratified by the accomplishment of significant works, but again, it is often abused when turned toward the group itself. In fact, the ability to abuse power is instinctively considered its true measure. If one cannot

abuse power, one does not really have it - one merely has the same ability to influence consensus that everyone else has. For this reason, people often test their power by wielding it in cruel and inconsiderate ways.

Healing from Conflicts

Having understood some of the reasons for conflicts in spiritual communities, we can proceed to the issue of healing. Here are some strategies to deal with the painful memories and emotions that follow conflicts in a group.

1: Getting Past Blame

When problems become serious, there is plenty of blame to go around. Each side may form a melodramatic and exaggerated version of events, portraying their opponents as demons or idiots. Conversely, people may indulge in self-recrimination, asking themselves, "Why didn't I see this happening? How could I have been so stupid?" As Nietzsche observed:

Guilt is always sought wherever there is failure; for failure brings with it a depression of spirits against which the sole remedy is instinctively applied: a new excitation of the feeling of power - and this is to be discovered in the condemnation of the 'guilty'.... To condemn oneself can also be a means of restoring the feeling of strength after a defeat.[14]

Blame is a common defense mechanism. To deal with a difficult memory, a person substitutes a kind of morality play. Defensive stories often seize on a single event as the sole cause of every problem and replace characters with caricatures. It is easy to see people not as the deep and contradictory processes they are, but as heroes and villains.

Ideas of blame are not necessarily false, but they get in the way of understanding the complex and ambiguous processes behind events. If physicists had thought electrons were evil, we never would have learned how atoms work. Psychology only came into its own after the idea of "sin" had fallen into disfavor among the educated.

Some situations seem to demand a finding of fault. For instance, if someone was thrown out of a group by the leader after the leader's lover flirted with them, it's hard for the person who was expelled to suspend judgment of the leader. If someone was removed after claiming to be the reincarnation of a prophet, others are likely to view that person with contempt. The appearance of jealousy, megalomania or other unsavory feelings is bound to create a feeling of blame, but a rush to judgment may oversimplify the situation. Other factors may have been just as important.

The inclination to think of mental problems as shameful can be an obstacle to healing. When we tell someone that they're crazy, we're insulting them, not encouraging them to get help. In the mythical land of Erewhon[15], a case of the sniffles was a guilty secret and a sin, but people would casually mention their mental treatment for shoplifting. If we considered a neurosis as blameless as a head cold, it might be easier to deal with.

Unfortunately, realizing we have a problem sometimes makes it worse, because we blame ourselves for it. We often try to control problematic thoughts by stigmatizing them: "I mustn't think that; there's something wrong with me if I think that!" This defense is known as repression. Its result, according to Freud[16], is to drive the thought into the unconscious mind, where it becomes stronger. Soon it will be bubbling up in twisted forms everywhere, together with its associated guilt.

A process of calm withdrawal from reproach is more effective. Learn to recognize blame models, but don't punish yourself for them; just watch them and let them go. Realize that emotions such as jealousy, self-glorification, and malice are natural processes, no more shameful than erosion or hunger. They are phenomena in people's minds, including yours and mine.

2: Sublimating Negative Emotion

After withdrawal from a troubled group situation, an outpouring of frustration and rage can create depression or obsession. One alternative is to sublimate this energy into new projects. Creation and destruction are two faces of one coin: the destruction of one situation can form the basis for a new and better one, while the creation of a new condition invariably destroys an old state of affairs.

When one's mind is in an obsessive state, turning it towards a different but emotionally similar object causes the obsession to fix on the new object. Anger can fuel poetry, art, music, construction, bodybuilding - any number of creative endeavors. Sorrow is naturally related to compassion; after a disaster, one's own sadness can become sympathy for the pain of everyone involved, even those on the other side of the fence, and so result in a broader and less blameful understanding. Disappointment can be frustrating, but it also underscores and illuminates one's own fuzzy aspirations: the failure of a group situation may leave one more aware of what one actually wants from groups.

3: Knowing Yourself

Most people do not know consciously what they want from groups. Unfortunately, what you don't know can hurt you. Before plunging into a group with a vague idea that it will solve your problems and assuage your loneliness, it would be wise to review the goals people have in groups and work out how you feel about each of them.

This is not easy, because we often deny that we desire exactly those things that we want most. There really is no substitute for the advice of a trained counselor. Simply talking out deeply held feelings with a therapist invariably leads to realizations which one would never have had in isolation. Understanding one's own drives and assumptions can only help the spiritual aspirant, and modern psychotherapy is more effective at providing this kind of self-knowledge than are most spiritual disciplines. The late Israel Regardie described himself as "adamant ... that to obtain the greatest benefit from Magic which is as it were a post-graduate study there should be some undergraduate work in a personal therapy. The dividends are enormous."[17]

Self-knowledge is good in itself, but it also has effects on behavior. Many defense mechanisms are unconscious, and uncovering their roots often inclines one to act differently in the future. An unconscious motive can only rule a person as long as it remains hidden or denied. Goals are sometimes compensatory: for instance, the desire to find sexual partners may have less to do with libido than with a desire for validation that compensates for low self esteem. Simply learning this may reduce the compulsive strength of the drive and lead to more realistic goals.

In some cases, this reduction of drive strength due to self-knowledge may leave one with little desire to participate in groups. If one's social motivations are largely compensatory, self-knowledge might dry them up to the point where one becomes self-complete and self-content: a hermit. If this really is your natural inclination, enjoy the freedom that comes with solitude! However, choosing isolation can also be a defense mechanism against the natural desire for community.

Prevention

Armed with a knowledge of group dynamics, and the ability to confront sources of trouble, groups can re-examine and rework themselves to be healthier and more healing. If your community has had problems, don't blame it all on the personality failings of people who have departed. Review the comments above on getting past blame, and consider some of these ways to make your community stronger.

1: Conscious Games

Accept certain kinds of social interaction as games. Roles can be set out in advance and performed for a limited duration. To formalize a support group, for instance, support might begin when a bell was rung; no critical comments would be allowed until the bell was rung again.

In support groups, people often attack others who are not present. Criticizing anyone who's there is against the rules, but everyone else is fair game. It's fine to talk about feeling bad because so-and-so did something awful, but no one is allowed to ask skeptically, "Hold on: how do we know you're telling the truth? Are we being fair to so-and-so?" Members who were unfortunate enough to miss a meeting may find themselves abruptly made unwelcome. Because the participants do not know they are playing a game, the judgments they form can persist after the game is over and cause conflicts. By making the rules explicit, people are less likely to mistake artificial role-playing judgments for real-life decisions.

2: Establishing Process

Groups of any kind are most efficient when people have well-defined roles to play. The ideal of "process" - drawing up procedures for decision-making ahead of time and following them scrupulously - is as useful in spiritual communities as in business. The less process there is in any group endeavor, the more likely conflicts become. Groups run in an anarchistic manner, with no formal process and no central authority, tend to be wracked by vendettas, slander, and petty politics rather than filled with deep trust. They are easily manipulated by fast-talking actors who know how to radiate sincerity and

appeal to personal goals. Formal process could guarantee some thoughtful review of these actors' exciting presentations before the group commits to them.

One of the most important processes is the procedure for conflict resolution. Justice is not a natural result of unconscious social dynamics; arriving at good decisions in an atmosphere of emotional conflict requires work. Shaffer and Anundsen present a practical procedure in their book[18]. Conflict resolution depends on re-establishing the commitment of all parties to the goals they share, and removing the feeling that those goals are threatened. If that can't be accomplished, then the conflict will probably result in lasting divisions.

Perfect people might not need to create any formal process, but people in the real world benefit from humane and consensual structures within which they are free to play the roles they have chosen. Within a structured (but not iron-fisted) approach, there is ample opportunity for deep trust to develop between particular individuals.

3: De-Emphasizing Judgment of Character

As explained above, negative judgment of character is one of the most persistent sources of conflicts in spiritual groups. By shifting the model of spiritual progress from a test-based to a self-paced approach, some of the pressures that encourage negative judgments can be reduced. In this model, individuals have the responsibility to decide for themselves whether they have internalized the symbols and formulae of an initiation, or achieved results from a practice, but they are free to ask others for their help in coming to this decision. It may take time for initiations and practices to have an effect, but time limits can be applied impersonally. The teachers become resources for the students rather than the scales on which their souls are weighed.

Initiations can be refocused away from derogatory models of the old self. Severing candidates from their old status is a necessary part of any initiation, under the van Gennep model accepted by anthropologists[19], but this severing does not have to be a moralistic condemnation; it can simply mark the passage. Exaggerated insults screen out candidates who don't suffer from low self esteem and inflate the egos of those already initiated. For instance, consider the "formula of the neophyte" of Freemasonry and the Golden Dawn, as accurately described by Aleister Crowley:

This formula has for its "first matter" the ordinary man entirely ignorant of everything and incapable of anything. He is therefore represented as blindfolded and bound.... It will be seen that the effect of this whole ceremony is to endow a thing inert and impotent with balanced motion in a given direction.... [T]he first matter of the work... is so muddled that many operations are required to unify it.[20]

It is worth noting that this comes from a tradition, Thelema, which claims to be free of the "Sin-Complex"! The same deprecating assumptions are present in many other traditions. If groups instead performed their initiations in a way that respected both the old and the new status while drawing a clear boundary between them, they might find that over time their memberships would gain self-esteem and lose their thirst for

superficial condemnation.

One objection to self-paced instruction is that the mystic path is a dangerous one, and aspirants left to their own pace would find themselves driven mad by premature revelation. However, if this were so, the explosive growth of mystical books open to everyone during this century would have stocked the asylums with casualties. In fact, according to my friends who have worked in the mental health system, it is very difficult to find anyone who was driven mad by a mystical path. When I have learned of magicians who went insane, even casual investigation has revealed non-magical reasons: for instance, they were diagnosed as schizophrenic before they began to practice, or they became amphetamine addicts. People generally have little problem defending themselves against disturbing spiritual insights - ordinary defense mechanisms are quite effective in blocking out spiritual experience. It takes work to open oneself to such things, and the doors readily slam shut, as every backslider can attest.

4: Applying Therapeutic Resources

As mentioned above, Israel Regardie urged every spiritual aspirant to first get psychotherapy. If a year or two of regular therapy were a condition of membership in spiritual groups, they might find themselves less troubled than they are today.

For people in religious groups, an outside counselor who is free from conflicts of interest is invaluable. Because the higher-ups are themselves involved with the social functioning and belief system of the group, it is dangerous to be entirely frank with them, and most people have more sense than to try.

One possibility that makes good economic sense is to sponsor professional group treatment as part of the community. The objection could be raised that spiritual groups serve many of the same purposes as therapy groups. However, they do so in a way that is fraught with defensiveness, conflicts of interest, and lack of empiricism. It is instructive to contrast Eric Berne's forthright and self-critical discussion of the pitfalls of group treatment[21] with Shaffer and Anundsen's cheerleading for community. Therapists have long cultivated research into the problems of their methods, while communities treat such inquiries as threats.

5: Separating Activities by Goal

Consider the fact that people use Christian churches to find sexual partners. This appears hypocritical, given the disdain for sexuality that is part of the Christian tradition. Yet churches that fail to provide an outlet for this natural urge may find their repression having the opposite effect, turning their holiest ceremonies into virtual singles bars. Rather than engaging in a destructive process of denial, most churches sponsor social gatherings as an outlet for this drive and others.

More generally, the potential for conflict of goals may be reduced by separating activities according to goal. People who are interested in a spiritual community for educational reasons do not necessarily want to endure an hour of social chatter to get

an hour of instruction every week, for example. The goals of contact and approval can be separated from the goals of education and guidance; this will enable the group to serve more people, rather than driving away people with more limited goals. A healthy group should satisfy most of the goals people have for communities, but it should not require people to participate in activities that are of little or no interest to them. Otherwise, they are bound to become frustrated, perhaps even to divorce themselves from the community altogether.

6: Widening the Scope of Belief

Spiritual communities in the West give lip service to freedom of belief, but this usually only means that choices are presented in a few clearly identified areas. For instance, some groups grant latitude on the afterlife, but are adamant about the accuracy of astrology and the extrapsychological reality of spell effects.

True liberalization is difficult. Even people who do not suffer from low self esteem often confuse disagreement with insult, and introducing flexibility and ambiguity into a group's belief system undercuts the goals of guidance and power. It is important to recognize that a declaration of liberty does not create freedom of thought: informal required beliefs can be harder to address than formal dogmas. Activities are necessary.

Burning your holy book is unlikely to help; a ritualized disavowal acts as a safety valve, much like the Christian Feast of Fools[22], and strengthens the reigning beliefs. Instead, participate in interfaith dialogue. Reward challenging perspectives by publishing them and discussing them in a collegial way. Sponsor friendly debates between opposing points of view, and list pros and cons of central tenets. Most of all, encourage individuals to accept disagreement and rely less on certainty as part of their spiritual growth.

Conclusion

People hurt by spiritual communities may find themselves abruptly friendless and isolated. An improved understanding of the factors that predispose groups towards conflicts and problems may assuage their pain. Catastrophe can be a spur to gain insight. And of course, more self-aware communities are less likely to accidentally hurt their members. If individuals and groups can transcend the defensiveness that results from blameful and moralistic approaches to group dynamics, they will find themselves better able to reap the rewards of community, and even to derive benefits from problems and failures.

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Introduction to Crowley Studies

Introduction to
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by Tim Maroney

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Truth and Falsehood

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Crowley Making Sign of the Horns

Introduction to Crowley Studies

(in Five Voices)

by Tim Maroney

Aleister Crowley (1875-1947) created a tradition known as Thelema, which is a spiritual or religious system centered around ideas of freedom and personal growth. If you study Crowley or Thelema you will encounter some common themes. This introduction deals with some of the major themes, but only in summary form. Real study requires independent work with the primary sources.

A traditional introduction to a religious system would set forth specific teachings and practices that its members would be expected to echo with one voice, but Thelema recognizes the validity and holiness of many different voices. This introduction takes the form of five different voices with five different agendas. Your voice is your own to evolve. Your views may or may not resemble any of the views of this introduction. Even if some thought you hold seems almost identical with one of the ideas in this introduction -- or utterly incompatible with all of them! -- it will still be uniquely yours, embedded firmly in your own personal matrix of thought and life in an individual, unique, irreplaceable and sacred way.

The five characters are myself, the Unreliable Narrator, on the main text, and four fictional characters in the voices: the Literalist, the Chaotic, the Skeptic and the Mystic. They are composite voices drawn loosely from the real world. I do not always agree with them, and they do not always agree with each other. I have attempted to show both their strong points and their weak points. No doubt I have also revealed some of my own in the process.

First: "Do What Thou Wilt"

Many thanks to reviewers: Lilinah Biti-Anat, Leigh Ann Hussey, Ramona Ruiz, Jeffrey Smith. All errors are the fault of Tim Maroney.

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[Entrance to Medmenham Abbey](#)"Do What Thou Wilt"

"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law" is a moral utterance found in the Thelemic foundation scripture, which is called the Book of the Law. "Do what thou wilt" is known as the Law of Thelema. It is derived from the rule of the fictional Abbey of Thélème in the classic satire Gargantua by the French priest and occult student François Rabelais. Crowley recommends study of Rabelais when discussing the Law. In Rabelais this rule was "fay çe que vouldras", French for "do what you will." From his work the maxim became a well-known part of Western literary life, and was adopted by the satirical English gentleman's society called the Hell-Fire Club or the Friars of

Medmenham.

In Crowley's writing, the Law of Thelema is explained in terms of True Will, the ultimate spiritual core or quintessence of each person, which has a divinely self-ordained path through the world of experience. "Do what thou wilt" refers not to the outer emotional and intellectual self but to this sacred inner core of personal divinity. Often will is contrasted with whim, and the knowing and doing of the True Will is painted not in terms of license and ease but of responsibility and hard work.

Since this new law replaces outdated moral codes based around sins and forbidden acts, a person knowing and doing the will might appear to be sinful from a traditional viewpoint. In Crowley's view the Thelemite is following a demanding code requiring great personal integrity even while, for instance, making love in ways that would be illegal in oppressive societies. Sometimes it is natural to express this ironic inversion of traditional mores in satiric form, and Crowley, Rabelais and the Hell Fire Club all made heavy use of the satirical style in their writing and work.

Crowley also held that "do what you will" was an ethical code bearing on how one should deal with others. However, he expressed a number of contradictory views of this ethical aspect of the Law. To him the Law of Thelema was almost completely explicable in terms of self-improvement and he sometimes even denied the existence of others. One view which one often finds in his writings, and is accepted by most of his followers, is that one must respect not only one's own will but the wills of others. All the wills are magically arranged so that there is no conflict between them, just as (so it was believed in Crowley's day) the stars are arranged so that they never collide. The personal will and the will of all are mystically joined as a whole which is also the basis of individuality in a paradoxical way. Collision between wills would indicate that one or the other person was not doing their True Will.

At other times Crowley said that the only error was to believe that others existed at all and that they had wills that could be violated. This was a solipsistic position inspired by his sympathy for the philosopher Berkeley and modified through Crowley's conception of God as a force within oneself rather than outside.

At yet other times Crowley said that there was no possibility of error and that all beings live according to the will-paths predestined by themselves before their births, from which any deviation would be impossible. In this view the appearance of deviation from the will is akin to the Buddhist doctrine that all beings are enlightened already, and the appearance of non-enlightenment is illusion. Crowley added that incarnation is voluntarily chosen as a play of shadow and light, in contrast with the traditional Eastern curse of rebirth. The idea that sorrow is illusory in a reincarnatory world was popular in Western occult circles during Crowley's formative period, both from Buddhism and from Spiritualism.

These apparent contradictions may have been reconciled for Crowley by the idea of levels of initiatory truth. He believed in a model of development by which people

progress through various initiations from a relatively unenlightened state to a state of pure selfhood, which is also paradoxically selfless. The realization of one's true nature comes at the same time that one realizes one's unity with all beings. At different levels of initiation there are different criteria of truth; the truth of one level is falsehood or nonsense to another. So for the ordinary person, "do what thou wilt" is a useful rule of thumb for interacting with others. At a higher level one realizes that there are no others, or that the distinction between self and non-self is an illusion, and so the Law of Thelema takes on a different, non-dual meaning.

There is a relationship between the Law of Thelema and the Wiccan Rede, "an it harm none do as ye will", the moral rule of late 20th century Witchcraft in English-speaking countries. The exact relationships between the three different forms of the maxim remain controversial. The co-founders of the modern Witchcraft movement, Gerald Gardner and Doreen Valiente, were aware of and sympathetic to Crowley's version. They also referred to a separate literary version in the work of French erotic novelist Pierre Louys, probably derived independently from Rabelais.

The Literalist might say this, with the formal opening: Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. As revealed in the Book of the Law, human history is divided into *Æons* which correspond to the precession of the Astrological Signs of the Zodiac. The new *Æon* of Horus, which began in 1904, brings with it a rotation in the roster of deities governing the planet as well as a revolution in moral codes. Gone are the old codes based on sin, sacrifice and other veils of shame and sorrow. The Law of Thelema is the code of absolute Freedom and absolute Responsibility, and the most perfect moral Law ever formulated. It will last for two thousand years until the rise of the next *Æon*.

The Chaotic might say this: True magical power resides in the unconscious mind, which is aware of many things beyond the scope of the ordinary consciousness. Descend far enough into the alien geometries of the unconscious and you might find out who and what you really are. This will free you from shame and guilt and other limitations that society has imposed on you. You can use magic to go inside, or music, orentheogens, or all sorts of new techniques waiting to be discovered.

The Skeptic might say this: There is a long history of respect for the individual in Western culture, starting with ancient Greek philosophy, waning during the authoritarian middle period of Christian dominance, and returning in force in the seventeenth century with the rise of social philosophers and democratic political institutions recognizing human rights. Existentialist philosophy of the 19th and 20th centuries developed a new set of ideas about the individual that is still relevant today. Crowley's work is part of this stream of thought, but his contributions are not major compared to those of great thinkers such as Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky on one hand and John Stuart Mill on the other.

The Mystic might say this: The True Will, the innermost spark of divine flame known in the Qabala as *Yechidah*, is unapproachable except by undertaking the work of the Path. By stilling the noise of the lower mind and focusing on the archetypal symbols hidden

behind the veil of the universe, and persisting through the great spiritual ordeals that turn away the dilettante and the coward, one may ultimately arrive at that eternal Self and place it into its rightful relation with the rest of the personality, setting intellect and emotion in their proper places as Will's servants rather than its oppressors.

Next: The Book of the Law

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The Book of the Law

The Tree of Life

Spiritual Practice

Truth and Falsehood

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The book has three chapters, one chapter for each member of a trinity of ruling deities. Its phrasing is often ambiguous and it employs an odd, unearthly prose-poetic style which many people find beautiful. Various interpretations of its meaning are possible and Crowley wrote several commentaries during his life, some of them interpreting its verses in very different ways from his other commentaries or in ways at odds with the surface meaning.

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The Golden Dawn Tree of Life

The Tree of Life

Crowley frequently makes reference to a diagram which purports to represent the spiritual universe. The Tree of Life has many forms in Qabala. This tradition of Jewish mysticism was adopted centuries ago by Christian mystics and magicians. The Tree Crowley used came to him from the English Qabalistic society known as the Golden Dawn. It is composed of ten spheres (sephiroth) and of twenty-two paths connecting the spheres, as well as the three veils above Kether, the veil of Paroketh (the Portal, below the central sphere of Beauty), the veil of Da'ath (the Abyss of Knowledge, below the three supernal spheres), and the corrupt and twisted Shells or Qliphoth echoing the Tree in a perverted and demonic form below Malkuth. The Tree is reflected into four worlds from the closest to God to the most physical, and there are a variety of other sub-symbolisms such the pillars of Mercy and Severity and the planar divisions.

The subject is too complex to be explained here, or even in a medium-sized book, and unfortunately, Crowley never gave much of an introduction. Dion Fortune ("The Mystical Qabalah") and Israel Regardie ("A Garden of Pomegranates") wrote well-regarded introductory books that are still easy to find. Kenneth Grant is the author of several idiosyncratic books building on Crowley's Qabala as well as Ophitic Gnosticism, Qliphothic descents, Lovecraftian cosmic abysses, Tantric sexual fluids, and a strange blend of other dark-side materials; his works serve as examples of what individuals can

do with Qabala when they are not bound by logic or rationality. There is also a broad spectrum of Qabalistic writing outside and different from the Golden Dawn and Thelemic systems.

In the Golden Dawn as well as Crowley's system, the Tree has two major roles. First, it is a map of spiritual progress. Starting at the lowest and most worldly sphere of the Tree of Life, known as Malkuth or Kingdom and representing the physical world, the spiritual adventurer ascends through the spheres by the paths, taking a new spiritual grade at each sphere, until finally a hardy few reach the ultimate sphere, Kether or Crown, representing the invisible unity of ultimate deity and the unseen true self. This is the accomplishment known in Christian mysticism as Union with God.

Second, the Tree of Life is used as a classification system. It is held that all the symbols of world religion and occultism find a proper place somewhere on this Tree, and perhaps all symbols and ideas whatsoever. Standard tables set out many of these correspondences from world religion and traditional magical teaching. Tables of this kind have been common in Western magic since the Renaissance.

A rich set of symbols is associated with the Tree of Life and familiarity with this symbolic tapestry is a prerequisite to spiritual practices in Crowley's system as well as the Golden Dawn. Much of the system is to be committed to memory so that it is readily available in one's ritual and meditative work.

The Tree of Life is an arrangement of symbols reminiscent of Platonic idealism, in which the world of sensory phenomena is held to be a secondary or degenerate form of a spiritual reality made up of pure ideas existing behind the appearance of the material world. The ideals are like lights and the events perceptible to the senses are only the shadows they cast.

Emanationist cosmological models similar to the Tree of Life were central in an ancient form of magic known as Neo-Platonism, which is arguably the oldest direct ancestor of modern occultism, and a Greco-Roman cousin of Gnosticism. Centuries after the fall of Rome, first Jewish Qabala and then Christian Qabala and Renaissance magic revived the Neo-Platonic cosmological and magical tradition. It had survived for a millenium in classical works, and in the Islamic preservation of Hellenistic knowledge in Spain and Southern France. The magical revivalists developed many different symbolic representations of the idealistic universe, including the Tree of Life, the Tarot, other philosophical card decks, and alchemical and zodiacal diagrams.

Philosophy often deals with two opposing perspectives, the nominalist and the idealist. Loosely speaking, nominalists focus on the names of things and their outward appearances as the currency of human knowledge, while idealism considers things in the world of senses to be only pale reflections of their ideal forms, or essences, or pure ideas. For instance, there are plenty of windows, but only one "windowness", which exists on a plane separate from the physical world. This plane of ideal forms is derided by nominalists but it was the basis of Renaissance philosophy and the Tree of Life.

Nominalism has been crucial to existentialism and phenomenology, important parts of 20th century philosophy, while mystical idealism is not widely considered a viable philosophy today.

Crowley insisted that he was not an idealist but a nominalist, while also insisting that the Tree of Life in the form known to him from the Golden Dawn truly represented the esoteric structure of reality and could only be harmed by changing its arrangement. This is one of many contradictory statements in Crowley's approach to philosophy and whether it is an inspired paradox or a careless contradiction is a subject of controversy.

Crowley also acknowledged the system of Enochian æthyrs, the Chinese Yi Jing, and the Buddhist system of psychology as peers of the Golden Dawn Tree of Life. He did not make as extensive use of these systems, feeling them to be either too large or otherwise inconvenient compared to the Tree, but they all play significant roles along Crowley's spiritual path.

Concerning Judaism, Crowley was anti-Semitic, like many in the Christian West in his day. Specifically, he committed the offense known as blood libel, a defamatory accusation that Jewish rites are celebrated using sacrificed Christian children. His anti-Semitism was a subject of conflict for him, given the centrality of the Jewish system of Qabala in the A.∴ A.∴. His works up until his death continue to wrestle with the difficulty that the Qabala is Jewish. One persistent rationalization is that the Jews stole Qabala from the Egyptians, an assertion that even the scholarship of his day didn't do much to support, and that seems clearly mistaken in the light of current knowledge. At times he would imply that the blood libel myth had a redeeming esoteric meaning, but usually he presented the accusation as a plain assault on the moral character of Jews. Crowley's anti-Semitism would be hard to defend and no doubt serves as an obstacle for many readers.

From the observations of the Unreliable Narrator: I would not say that there is much anti-Semitism visible in Thelemites today, no more than in society at large -- which is to say, it is a problem, but it doesn't appear to be a specifically Thelemic problem. Respect for Qabala as a Jewish tradition may have turned the tide. For this reason I have not put any anti-Semitism into the voices.

The Literalist might say this: All the religions of the world are but Veils for the One Secret Tradition known to Initiates throughout the ages. The Prophet of the Silver Star has left us with the Key to the Secret Doctrine in the form of Liber 777, the great Table of Correspondences. By meditating on and invoking the energies of the Paths and Spheres all magical power and mystical insight may be attained. Unto those who have scaled the heights of the Tree and become Adepts (or even higher Initiates) is reserved True Understanding; from these lofty heights are made possible Perspectives that utterly transcend and negate the views of persons ensnared in the illusions of the lower Spheres.

The Chaotic might say this: Symbols are the keys to magic, but models are only models

and many different valid models are possible. The Tree of Life is one excellent model but to get locked into believing that it is The One True Way would be to impose harmful limitations on your own mind. The power that comes from these systems comes from the charge the symbols acquire in your unconscious mind and not from their "truth." There are other useful models like Peter Carroll's eight colors of magic, the Enochian æthyrs, the Leary eight-brain model, and so on. Magicians should come up with their own system and transcend everyone else's.

The Skeptic might say this: There are shared themes and formulae in world religion but we now understand that there is much more authentic diversity than was admitted by older scholarship. In the 19th century it was common to think that all religions are only reflections of one underlying tradition. Scholars of the time tried to unify disparate traditions and myths but in the process they imposed preconceptions and waved away real differences. This unifying trend from scholarship was combined with the old method of tables used by occultism. Tables of correspondence are flawed because they strip down complex and diverse symbols to single points of debatable contact, and so they conflate dissimilar symbols. This is considered offensive by the cultures whose complex traditions are reduced to ciphers in this way. Tables of this kind may be useful as generators for ritual and meditation practices but as part of an apparatus of interpretation in comparative religion they are worse than useless today.

The Mystic might say this: There is only one Path, the Path to Oneself. Along the way one encounters the same Truths clothed in a variety of forms and symbols. To synthesize and reduce this appearance of Many to the One is the Great Work of Alchemy. It is the attainment of perfect Harmony and Equilibrium within oneself and with the world. Mystics of the ages have always recognized this Unity in each other; religious differences have been caused by unhealthy political usurpers of mystical tradition; they perverted the pure Teachings for power over the people. Once integrated the symbols become tools, repositories for the Energies one has visited and invoked. At the end of the Path the Great Diagram will become One with the Self and the World in a Mystic Marriage, and reveal concealed Glories undreamed of by the profane.

Next: Spiritual Practice

Previous: The Book of the Law

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Many occultists endlessly spin out cosmologies and other symbolic arrangements having little relationship to any apparent pragmatic issue. Crowley speculated quite a lot, but coming from the rigorous curriculum of ritual and meditation of the Golden Dawn, and exposure to Buddhist monasticism and Hindu yoga, he was more concerned

with setting up a program of spiritual exercises and degrees.

In Thelema the goal of the path is always the same, to be the most oneself that one can be, to know who you really are and to let that eternal self or True Will be the guiding force in life. To do this it is recommended that one practice ritual and meditative disciplines that still and focus the mind, travel astrally to various locations in the spiritual world inside or outside oneself, invoke sacred energies and beings, evoke and command spirits, attain to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel at the central sphere of the Tree of Life (called Tiphareth or Beauty), and at the Abyss between the supernal and lower spheres, give up all one's conceptions about one's self in favor of the radical perspective of the eternal self.

Initiation is a major theme in Crowley's system of Thelema, as in its two direct ancestors, the Golden Dawn and Theosophy. Initiation is a complex subject and has been the subject of extensive study by anthropologists. Freemasonry is an initiatic tradition in Western society that follows the model of initiation accepted by anthropologists, and esoteric Freemasonry has been a major contributor to the Golden Dawn, Theosophy, and Thelema as well as other magical groups, including modern Witchcraft. Initiations mark stages in personal development. Occult theories differ on whether initiations induce progress by working magic on the initiate, or whether they mark progress already made in personal work, or both.

The practices of Crowley's system are arranged in an initiatic progression that is called the A.∴ A.∴ system (those glyphs after the letter "A" are triangles made up of three dots, a Masonic usage indicating a claim to possess the Lost Word). This curriculum is a combination of Golden Dawn magic, Yogic and Buddhist meditation practices, and original practices developed by Crowley. The work required to achieve even the middle ranges of the system is very difficult and few people have accomplished this. Many Thelemites have claimed personal attainment in A.∴ A.∴ terms without undertaking the basic requirements.

The curriculum requires the daily practice of rituals and meditations, as well as magical retirements, a kind of one-person spiritual retreat in which weeks or months at a time may be spent in meditative solitude. The motto of Crowley's literary and magical journal, the Equinox, was "The Method of Science, the Aim of Religion". While his methods fall short of a truly scientific standard, one feature his system shares with anthropology is the requirement that one keep a detailed journal of practices and observations. Writing a phenomenological record of ritual experience is a crucial part of what is called ethnographic field observation in anthropology and of the A.∴ A.∴ system as well.

The A.∴ A.∴ system of initiations follows the spheres of the Tree of Life, as did the Golden Dawn. In addition to the Golden Dawn and a variety of Freemasonic and fringe Masonic degrees, Crowley gave and received the A.∴ A.∴ grades, the Ordo Templi Orientis degrees, and the ordinations and bishoprics of the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica or Gnostic Catholic Church. These are all different systems but there is some overlap in themes and practices. The O.T.O. system follows a traditional model derived from

Freemasonry, although like all Crowley's groups it admits both women and men. Rather than any arduous practices being required as in A.∴ A.∴, patience, devotion, the O.T.O. initiation rituals, some secret teachings, and a fraternal social process are supposed to equip the initiate over time to deal with inner mysteries of a magical nature. The EGC system is closely related to the O.T.O. but revolves around the traditional ecclesiastical offices of Priest and Bishop, as found in the wandering Bishop tradition of esoteric Christianity.

A number of new Thelemic groups with their own initiations and courses of study have sprung up since Crowley's death in 1947 and several are currently in operation. In addition, there are a number of different lineages of A.∴ A.∴ and several rival claimants to the title of O.T.O. The largest O.T.O. group, under Hymenaeus Beta, has won court cases in which it asserted the right to the O.T.O. name and to its share of the Crowley estate.

The Literalist might say this: The A.∴ A.∴ is the Great White Brotherhood, that hidden order of Initiates that has existed in Service throughout the ages and has emerged behind such masks as the Rosicrucians and the Zoroastrian Magi. The Third Order of A.∴ A.∴ has direct access to the deities and sages who operate the Occult Government not only of this world but of other worlds as well, both physical and spiritual. The Book of the Law was sent to humanity by the A.∴ A.∴ on the occasion of the revolution in Æons declared by its Secret Chiefs. Crowley held the grade of Magus in the A.∴ A.∴ and as such uttered the Word of the Æon, THELEMA, which all members accept as natural Law. Outer Orders such as O.T.O. are less important than the Inner Order of A.∴ A.∴ but exist in Service to it and may prepare the worthy to scale its heights.

The Chaotic might say this: The A.∴ A.∴ is an abstraction which includes all authentic magical paths. There are real groups that call themselves the A.∴ A.∴ but its real nature is in the continuity of spiritual traditions everywhere. Different groups may be best for different people and thinking of any one group as the One True Path is a remnant of the Æon of Osiris. Today there are spiritual methods that improve on Crowley's curriculum, like isolation tanks, trance music, sigilization, and mind machines. The Protestant work ethic is obsolete and there's no reason a magical path has to cop a Victorian attitude. Progress is possible through play as much as perseverance and perspiration.

The Skeptic might say this: Religious systems present themselves as revolving around doctrine, practice, and morality but they can often be best understood by the methods of political science, group psychology, sociology and anthropology. The homogenizing and leveling effects of social bonding are always in tension with the freedom of the individual. The ruling system offers a narrow range of compromises to preserve an appearance of free thought while keeping the range of acceptable viewpoints and statements narrow through tacit groupthink processes and/or overt dogma. The work of such scholars as Gershom Scholem, who researched the dynamic between traditional dogma and individual spiritual experience in Qabala, and Ellic Howe, who documented the social dynamics of the Golden Dawn, is useful in understanding Thelema as well. Thelemic groups have a dogmatic tendency that is in conflict with their commitment to

freedom. There are many power dynamics involved in initiatic hierarchy and many people seek degrees for status and power. Still there is no psychological reason to doubt the basic premise of spiritual exercise -- that by dedicating time and work to the development of mental faculties they may be strengthened just as physical exercise strengthens the body.

The Mystic might say this: The ordinary mind is a roaring babble that drowns out the voices of the Holy Guardian Angel and of the True Will. Establishing Silence through Yogic concentration, then calling upon and strongly imagining the Forces behind the sensible world and emanating downward from Kether, one may climb the Ladder of Lights and obtain Enlightenment. Most people require instruction by groups to learn the practices that make Enlightenment more than a faint hope or dream and all such Fraternities derive their authority from A. . A. ., which has existed since humans have and perhaps longer. Descending from Kether is a great Spiritual Hierarchy that beckons downwards to us and calls us Upward, as our Aspiration also lifts us Upward through the successive Emanations of the one supreme and invisible God within ourselves.

Next: Truth and Falsehood

Previous: The Tree of Life

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Truth and Falsehood

Crowley's doctrine of truth and falsehood is easily misunderstood. It recurs often in his system and is the central theme of his well-liked poetic book of Qabala, the Book of Lies. Contradiction to Crowley was not a problem but a sign of a higher mystical understanding transcending the rational. Ordinary understanding is held to be inadequate to engage Truth and in fact it is thought to be in the way. A standard preparation for the Ordeal of the Abyss is to constantly multiply contradictions in one's mind, each thought contradicting the previous, until the trance known in yoga as samadhi is attained. Every fixed idea is shown to be partial and false, including ideas about the self, until finally the tyrannical usurper Reason is dethroned and the True Will comes to take its place.

When considering issues of Crowley's apparent literalism there is always the question of how literally he expected his statements to be taken. He demanded allegiance to certain ideas but also insisted that every idea must be doubted. To many Thelemites Crowley's declarative statements are literal truth as well as higher spiritual Truth. To other readers, Crowley was almost always joking and the reader should always be looking for the joke.

In the secret societies studied by anthropologists truth is relative to initiatory degree. The truth of a higher initiate is incomprehensible to one of lower degree, while the truth of lower degrees is understood to be false by the higher. There are elements of this idea in Thelema as well.

One interpretation holds that Thelema contains a higher and lower cultus. In this model the outer orders and lower degrees are targeted at people who are not yet Thelemites in themselves, so they are attracted by a devotional religion with traditional trappings and set dogmas. At some level these people will see through these trappings to the mystical Truth, as Crowley intended them to do, and at that point they might or might not continue to hold a literal belief in any part of the system. In this interpretation it might be considered rude to interrupt the natural development through the devotional or literalistic stage as the Skeptic voice seems to be doing.

The Literalist might say this: The Law of Liberty is the Charter of Universal Freedom and the sole rule and guide of life in this Æon. It is Truth on every level. While all mundane truth is false in a sense, still there is the level of ordinary human reality with its pragmatic rule of truth by which people can agree on whether it is raining outside or whether the grocery store is open or closed. The Law of Thelema and the Æon of Horus are inspired mystical Truths emanating from the Third Order of A. . . A. . . but they are also natural Laws and pragmatic human facts. There is a definite Current of planetary Energy flowing from the Third Order against which it would be foolish and self-defeating to struggle. It is the Will of All to align themselves with this Current.

The Chaotic might say this: Crowley was an early shock trooper in the ontological guerrilla warfare waged by people like Brion Gysin, A. O. Spare, William Burroughs, Timothy Leary, Peter Carroll, and Robert Anton Wilson. He wasn't afraid to directly assault traditional value systems; he demonstrated the limits of logic; he explored the distant cognitive frontier; and he insisted on individual thought instead of dogma. He could sometimes forget his own principles but that's part of the process too. At least he kept his sense of humor!

The Skeptic might say this: Crowley's negative view of intellect is comparable with Blake's view of Newton and Urizen. If we accept that Crowley was in spirit a nominalist and freethinker then it becomes possible to think of him as one of the highly differentiated points on the existentialist spectrum, perhaps a kind of occult Kierkegaard. Other existentialists also dedicated much of their work to the reclamation and validation of denied or underworld feelings. In this respect existentialists are related to the decadent poets, of which Crowley was a late example. He might deserve more study than he has gotten as a literary contributor but he does not hold up as a philosophical contributor -- he was a sloppy thinker, and he often allowed his doctrine of contradictions to degenerate into a mere excuse for representing contradictions as paradoxes.

The Mystic might say this: Truth and falsehood as applied by the intellect are uniformly false judgments when viewed from the higher perspective afforded from the three

supernal Spheres of the Tree of Life. Real Truth is only known to the Master of the Temple, the passive, observing, meditative Self first assumed by the Babe of the Abyss who is born after the fall of Reason. Truth can only be spoken by the Magus, whose development and grade follows the Master of the Temple, but He is cursed to have His Word turn into falsehood whenever it is heard. This Truth is beyond any possible description in words but could be indicated as the Understanding of the perfect integrity of the fabric of the personal psyche and the world that it creates.

Next: Sex and Gender

Previous: Spiritual Practice

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Laylah, a Scarlet Woman. Sex and Gender

Since Rabelais Theleme has been associated with libertinism and Crowley's version is no exception. Crowley was a libidinous individual and he delighted in flouting Christian sexual taboos. He was a bisexual sex magician with some interest in sadism and masochism, as well as sexual adventurism of other types. According to published diaries, much of his sex magic was done with sex workers, or as he preferred to say, whores. He felt this term was a compliment.

Like many late-19th-century occultists, Crowley thought that scholarship had discovered that the one true religious tradition behind all the appearances of world religion was a phallic cult. His own system he described as "solar-phallic", and while the particular sexual formulae he employed are secret, it is no secret that the formulae of all three groups, A.·. A.·., O.T.O. and EGC all are charged with sexual significance. Other occult groups of the time, such as the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor, P. B. Randolph's various endeavors, and Thomas Lake Harris's sexual Spiritualism also contained sex magic teachings, and Theosophy contains a refutation of the phallic theory by presenting it as the decadent and harmful magic of the race before ours.

Crowley had a personal problem with sexism, even misogyny. This is reflected both in the subjection of the female sexual force to the male in his phallogocentric system, and in the comments he was prone to make about women in his writing. This is bound to put off many readers of both genders and it is a legitimate concern about Crowley's character as well as about his ritual formulae, which use women as consecrated instruments and put the male creative force at the center. Whether this is a reason to abandon Crowley, or simply a problem in his work to be dealt with, is a matter for personal judgment. The idea that his sexism did not exist, or is not a problem, or did not find its way into his sexual formulae, is not compatible with the evidence.

There is an increasing awareness of the problem by Thelemic practitioners and groups, and it is likely that reforms will be forthcoming in the next few decades. In the meantime there is still a great deal of repetition of Crowley's sexism by his disproportionately male

followers and this has had to be reflected in some of the voices below. They reflect positions that one might expect to hear today.

The Literalist might say this: Male and female are eternal dualities symbolized by the pillars of Mercy and Severity of the Tree of Life. The male is the lively, enlightening, creative, jovial force of the Pillar of Mercy, while the female is the brooding, dark, harsh, silent, but nourishing matrix of the Pillar of Severity in which the divine Seed takes shape. Creation is a higher function than destruction and Light is a higher power than darkness and so ours is a Solar-Phallic Religion. The female holds an honored place with us as the sacred shrine in which the Holy Spirit dwells, but never forget that she is only a temporary repository for the true God, the Quintessence, the ultimate Creative Will as expressed by the Representative of the Sun on Earth, the Phallus.

The Chaotic might say this: Sex is a serious road to magical power and a gateway to the unconscious mind. Crowley deserves credit for working it and trying to explain it as well as he could, but sex has moved on from the 19th century and taking Crowley's views seriously today would be like reading old marriage manuals to interpret Madonna or Marilyn Monroe. Sex is too wild to be tied down to one set of formulas and Crowley is sometimes just a Puritan in reverse. There are an infinite number of sexual forms and Crowley's don't seem as special or unique today as they did a hundred years ago.

The Skeptic might say this: The theory of the universal phallic religion flourished as a reaction against sex-negativity when it was hard to talk rationally about sex in Western culture. The theory has not held up now that cultural barriers to sexual discussion have been lowered. Some of the phallicists' discussion of deities like Priapus and Shiva remains respectable and valid but not their universalism. Sex and religion are linked but Crowley's system is not the last word on their relationship, and his theory of a single sexual secret preserved through the ages is definitely false. Crowley's sexism was a product of his time but seems even worse than that because of his satirical attempts to flout taboos with offensive speech, including violations of the polite (but covertly sexist) verbal code of ostensible respect for women. Many religions in the 20th century and beyond are faced with the challenges of feminist reform and there is as much (or little) hope for Thelema as for other traditionally sexist systems like Christianity and Hinduism.

The Mystic might say this: Every person is both man and woman, and every man and every woman is a star. The mystical formula of Union of Opposites or Thelemic Love, related to the Hegelian dialectical formula, can be enacted with thoughts or with bodies and is constantly enacting itself in the world around us. It is the Key to the Stone of the Philosophers and to the Universal Medicine. To downplay or disparage the male-female polarity would be to cripple the magic -- it is their very difference from each other that makes their Union powerful. In a ritual involving sex the actual equipment of the partners are consecrated ritual tools which must be used according to their natural formula like any other tool of High Magick; hence the man is the creative and active partner while the woman is passive, receptive and silent. This is not sexism but biology.

Next: Christianity

Previous: Truth and Falsehood

Related Links:

Scarlet Woman Lodge - this Lodge of the O.T.O. in Austin has sponsored a gender conference and read a national paper on Crowley's misogyny

Temple of Thelema - revised its traditional materials to remove sexism and elevate female images.

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Christianity

Crowley's hostility to Christianity was vitriolic and intense. There are many Thelemites who are equally hostile and would not accept or admit that any part of Christianity, esoteric or not, is part of Thelema. This utter exclusion of Christianity does not reflect Crowley's complex views on the subject. From his texts a few starting points are clear.

Biographically, Crowley's hatred of Christianity began with his upbringing in the oppressively conservative Protestant tradition known as the Plymouth Brethren, to which his parents belonged. Moralistic and restrictive, the Plymouth Brethren were also obsessed with the Book of Revelation. His mother called the rebellious Crowley "the Beast" early in life well before the Book of the Law confirmed him in this title.

Crowley was a self-identified opponent of Christianity who also practiced Jewish and Christian occult traditions and put the works of Christian mystics on his required reading lists. The key to this contradiction lies in his æonic doctrine. He believed that somehow the Æon of Osiris went horribly wrong, but the Osiris legend remained the natural formula of the time even though its chief exemplar, mainstream Christianity, was corrupt. He is not clear on the details, but the theory appears to be that the Gnostics (a preoccupation of occultists late in the 19th century) were sex magicians who blended Paganism with Christianity and held the sexual inner keys of the formula of the Eucharist of the Catholic Mass, a symbolic form of the secret carried down by the occult underground through the centuries. Crowley's Gnostic Mass, one of his most frequently practiced rituals today, is meant to restore that secret to its proper place. Given this and Crowley's reliance on the reinterpreted Book of Revelation, it would not be far off the mark to call Thelema itself a form of esoteric Christianity.

As mentioned above with respect to the Tree of Life and tables of correspondence, taking the symbols of other religions and placing them into new systems is often considered offensive by believers. An examination of the table of correspondence associated with Christianity in Crowley's 777 reveals a wicked sense of humor at work. This together with his vitriolic hostility to Christianity suggests that he was aware that reducing others' traditions to short notes in a table would not be appreciated and that

the Christian elements of his system were at least in part meant to annoy traditional believers. However, it would be a mistake to say that the Gnostic Mass and similar Christian elements in Thelema are low parodies merely meant to offend; many Christian symbols are at the very heart of Crowley's system and evidence demonstrates his sincere devotion to them. For Crowley as for other satirists there was pleasure in using Christian symbols in ways likely to offend, but that was not his primary motive in using symbols like the Rose and Cross.

The Literalist might say this: Christianity is the curse of the world. Those who cling to it in the new Æon of Horus are like those who enslave themselves to the undead and they will be banished when the Sun shall fully rise. When the Prophet wrote "the Christians to the lions!" He did not speak idly or in jest. Christians are the enemies of Freedom and they do not even understand the few fragments of the Secret Tradition that are perverted in their rites. Only when they are all gone can we truly become as "a strong Man who goeth forth to do his Will."

The Chaotic might say this: Christianity is the hand with the stick that has instilled shame and guilt as virtues so we have a whole society of mass-produced clone-farm humanoids who are too afraid to think. The way to dissolve these shackles on a mass scale is through a culture of individuality and the reality distortion effect that has become the dominant paradigm already. Christians are plodding, literal mechanoids who would probably lock up all the magicians if they could get away with it.

The Skeptic might say this: The freethinking movement has had an interface with Christianity longer than it has with occultism, which has often been rigid, dogmatic, and prone to doctrinal warfare. Christianity in both Catholic and Protestant forms has done more than its share of harm in Western culture, and committed injustices on a large scale when it has held power. These failings are well known to us because we come from the Christian culture. There are few religions that seem much better when they acquire political ascendancy, at least from a perspective of human rights, but we are less aware of the similar problems in other cultures and so we are willing to embrace spiritual traditions from cultures with histories of religious abuses such as India, China, Japan, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Persia, and so on. Of the many faiths, Christianity is among those adapting most quickly to the modern world and the idea of human rights, and now at the start of the 21st century liberal theologies are taken seriously in many mainstream denominations and in Vatican II. It is hard to find a Thelemic group as devoted to pluralism as liberal Christian groups and their close relatives (e.g., the Society of Friends, Unitarian-Universalism, Matthew Fox -- some Vatican II documents are more progressive than Thelemic consensus). Authoritarian modes were established by Crowley and persist to this day; in the unlikely event that Thelema rose to political power, its authoritarianism suggests that it would be no better than Christianity or other faiths in this regard.

The Mystic might say this: The Equinox of the Gods has come as it does every two thousand years, installing new Officers and Rites, and sweeping away the darkness of the old ways. Where once blazed the Cross of Suffering as the Sun of Beauty now there

is the Crowned and Conquering Child, whose message is not of salvation from without but Grace from Within, the Kingdom of Heaven that is within you (as the phrase survives in the corrupted Gnostic Gospels that appear in the Christian Bible). Through all the Æons there is one thread of tradition and one Great White Brotherhood whose immortal spiritual Chiefs share the Wisdom of their Teaching with humanity. The Christians could not destroy the Gnosis and now the Initiates of the Sanctuary of the Gnosis have embraced the formula propounded at the new Equinox with Joy and Love in their hearts.

Next: Crowley's Personality

Previous: Sex and Gender

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Impersonating a Scotsman

Crowley's Personality

Crowley was an unusual and involved individual and his views changed over the course of the more than fifty years of his writing career. It is not unusual for him to contradict himself on the same page. The best way to get acquainted with him as a character is to read biographies of him and his own books. Unfortunately, there is more bad biography of Crowley than good. It would be difficult to deny his many character failings, but the level of vitriolic abuse leveled at him both during and after his lifetime is remarkable, and it only continues to grow as bad writers with low standards of truth and fairness find the sensationalistic aspects of his life -- both real ones and confabulated ones -- useful for the swelling of their coffers. Crowley has not been adopted by the literary mainstream, and so the reader has to rely upon biographers with a religious ax to grind, whether one is reading a sympathetic biography, a critical one, or a hatchet job.

Probably the two best sources are Crowley's own "Confessions" and Israel Regardie's "The Eye in the Triangle". Crowley's failings are disguised, but without success, in his own account of himself; both his vices and his virtues shine through clearly. Regardie gives a critical but sympathetic and engaged account of Crowley's spiritual career, not turning a blind eye to his flaws or his accomplishments.

In short, though, Crowley was talented, intelligent, capable, arrogant, judgmental, prejudiced, and not afraid to turn politeness aside if it would get in the way of a good insult. His talents extended to ritual and meditative practice, writing, mountain climbing, sexual athletics, attracting followers, and getting publicity. His vices went as far as anti-Semitic blood libel, rabid hostility to Christianity, misogyny, neglect of family, loss of friends through obnoxiousness, and megalomania. There are marked similarities between Crowley, MacGregor Mathers (his mentor in the Golden Dawn), and Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (who founded the Theosophical Society). All three were charming, impressive, well-read, anger-prone, tough-talking international spiritual leaders. The

current euphemism "strong ego" does not begin to describe their arrogance. Followers were drawn to them by their magnetism, energy and talent, but frequently did not know what to make of their character flaws. In each case there is cause to suspect mental disorder by the criteria of modern psychology, but now psychology is also beginning to study a possible link between creativity and mood disorder, while Szasz and Laing continue to remind us that inspired wisdom is often socially condemned as insanity. Simple pathologizing perspectives of such people are necessarily oversimplifications, but they give so much ammunition to character assassination that it is inevitable. Crowley, Mathers and Blavatsky were creators of new religious traditions when traditional belief in Christianity was on the decline because of new knowledge -- knowledge of the scientific world on one hand, and of Eastern and pre-Christian religions on the other.

Whether one could accept a flawed character such as Crowley as a spiritual leader depends on one's model of spirituality. Treating any of the three as moral exemplars would seem incompatible with their biographies. If the purpose of religion is to produce moral exemplars then these religious endeavors have failed. However, if the purpose of religion is to produce spiritual adventurers then they have succeeded. A person might have attained to real spiritual accomplishments yet retain base characteristics of their personality.

Crowley's life was an adventure. When he was not climbing mountains he was being set upon by thieves in dark alleys, getting thrown out of countries for his sexual immorality, recklessly spending away two inherited fortunes, writing fantastic tracts and books claiming to reveal the mysteries of magic, scandalizing a culture that had adapted to Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Swinburne, having torrid affairs, producing theatrical performances, getting reviewed in the popular press, forming new magical orders and taking over or helping to break up others, being reviled in headlines as "the Wickedest Man in the World", and through all this maintaining what most people would consider a rigorous course of spiritual practice, journaling, and interpretive writing. His career is reminiscent of the 19th century adventurer/writer Richard Francis Burton, a man Crowley admired.

In this main text voice I have tried to be cautious and say only those things that I was sure could be defended by the evidence. Biography is a hard subject in which to be objective because it deals with personalities, and your own relationship with Crowley the dead writer and spiritual leader will no doubt be unique. For the last time, your Unreliable Narrator will turn the subject over to the little voices inside his head.

The Literalist might say this, with the formal closing at the end: Crowley was the Prophet of the Silver Star, the chosen human agent of the Secret Chiefs. He was selected because for all his human frailties he was a man of prodigious strength, intelligence and discipline, an occultist of many incarnations who was poised to assume the highest mantle and fit himself for a place in the City of the Pyramids together with the Prophets and Bodhisattvas of other religions. The attacks on Crowley's character by yellow journalists are libelous and fabricated. To understand Crowley you must work his

system, attaining through the power of your own True Will the keys to the Great Work, and only then judge Crowley from an Initiated perspective. Any other perspective is unequal to the task of interpreting an Initiate. Love is the law, love under will.

The Chaotic might say this: I'm tired of Crowley. It seems like all the people who are into him are into nothing else. I'm suspicious of his system; way too regimented, way too hierarchical. Yeah, Crowley made a contribution to magic, but other people have made better ones in the last fifty years. We've learned a lot in the 20th century about real freedom and sexual liberation, not this Victorian captain-of-your-own-soul and master-of-the-passions crap. Crowley was a hung-up jerk in a lot of ways and I'd usually rather read something that is more relevant to my life today.

The Skeptic might say this: Crowley studies have not been adopted by academics, with good reason. His work is derivative and like Blavatsky he could be traced to a handful of main sources. He does not give credit where credit is due to previous traditions and he fails to teach the reader about his sources. The intensity of Crowley's sexism and racism is beyond the standards of his day and endorsing him could be tantamount to endorsing those prejudices. Spiritual progress is feeding people, helping those who need it, participating in the social process to make it more just and humane, and Crowley has nothing to contribute to that. (Also almost all of his poetry is terrible; why would anyone want to study it?)

The Mystic might say this: The documents of A. . . A. . . in Class A are inspired writings from a praeterhuman Intelligence, a direct and flawless link to the Secret Chiefs. The transmission of these gems of True Wisdom and Perfect Happiness is all that one needs to know about the career of To Mega Therion, the Great Beast, the Magus who spoke through the physical vessel of the man named Aleister Crowley, himself merely a Student of no great importance. The course of study of A. . . A. . . is the work not of Crowley but of The Master Therion and has been issued under the direct Authority of the Third Order. Who masters it masters the universe and himself. May you achieve in this life the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, that great spiritual Being assigned as your Guide, who will teach you better than any other.

Next: Crowley's Writing

Previous: Christianity

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Aleister Crowley

Introduction to Crowley

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"Do What Thou Wilt"

The Book of the Law

The Tree of Life

Spiritual Practice

Truth and Falsehood

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Facts and Phallacies

The Freedom of Doubt

The Included Middle

A Letter to Close

Pentagram Ritual

Tetragrammaton Mass

Why Crowley Doesn't Suck

The Book of Dzylan

Crowley Making Sign of the Horns

Introduction to Crowley (in Five Voices)

by Tim Maroney

In Fall 1997 this 10,000 word piece came forth over the period of a few hours, preceding the end of my four-year relationship and my then-longest job. I was concerned that no living writer was looking at Aleister Crowley from a critical perspective, as opposed to

muckraking or defensive advocacy writing. The literary conceit of the five voices was intended to broaden the scope of public opinion. It will be published in an improved and expanded form, with two new chapters and an additional voice, in the upcoming disinformation anthology in 2003.

Aleister Crowley (1875-1947) created a tradition known as Thelema, which is a spiritual or religious system centered around ideas of freedom and personal growth. If you study Crowley or Thelema you will encounter some common themes. This introduction deals with some of the major themes, but only in summary form. Real study requires independent work with the primary sources.

A traditional introduction to a religious system would set forth specific teachings and practices that its members would be expected to echo with one voice, but Thelema recognizes the validity and holiness of many different voices. This introduction takes the form of five different voices with five different agendas. Your voice is your own to evolve. Your views may or may not resemble any of the views of this introduction. Even if some thought you hold seems almost identical with one of the ideas in this introduction -- or utterly incompatible with all of them! -- it will still be uniquely yours, embedded firmly in your own personal matrix of thought and life in an individual, unique, irreplaceable and sacred way.

The five characters are myself, the Unreliable Narrator, on the main text, and four fictional characters in the voices: the Literalist, the Chaotic, the Skeptic and the Mystic. They are composite voices drawn loosely from the real world. I do not always agree with them, and they do not always agree with each other. I have attempted to show both their strong points and their weak points. No doubt I have also revealed some of my own in the process.

Many thanks to reviewers: Lilinah Biti-Anat, Leigh Ann Hussey, Ramona Ruiz, Jeffrey Smith. All errors are the fault of the author.

First: "Do What Thou Wilt"

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The Included Middle

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Pagan History

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The Problems of Syncretism

Tetragrammaton Mass

Theory of Divination

Why Crowley Doesn't Suck

Why I Study Magic

A Letter to Close

by Tim Maroney (1999)

(Originally published in the newsletter of Hodos Chameleonis Oasis in Sacramento, California.)

One of the many curious inheritances of the O.T.O. is Liber CI: An Open Letter to Those

Who May Wish to Join the Order Enumerating the Duties and Privileges. It is a wide-ranging and ambitious scheme describing what the Order might some day become, but it presents itself as a description of the actual state of the O.T.O. In fact, it never was that, and because our understanding of the goals of the Order has matured, it never will be. Though the document says that it is meant to be read by prospective members to help them understand what they would be joining, it is misleading at best, and may even discourage some of the better potential initiates without some clarification.

The leadership's reverence for tradition has led it into a full endorsement of this document, although a more cautious appraisal is called for. For instance, in Equinox III:10 and on the official web site otohq.org, the Open Letter is introduced as follows:

These regulations first appeared in The Equinox III(1) (Detroit: Universal, 1919) and constitute our best and most comprehensive guidelines for Thelemic social intercourse. Certain provisions will need to be modified to take advantage of the U.S.A.'s comparatively enlightened tax-exemption statutes as applied to religious organizations -- a few are of dubious legality at this writing. Most of the principles outlined herein have long been observed in the U.S. O.T.O. In addition, Equinox III:10 says that:

This Intimation should be closely studied in conjunction with the Constitution, the Open Letter and other relevant papers published in this volume by those who are concerned with the future direction of the O.T.O., in the United States and abroad.

It is normal for the religious to conflate their ideal for themselves with the reality of their groups, and intelligent people know that they should take accounts of a religion by its members with a grain of salt. In this case, though, traditionalism has won out over idealism. The dream of Liber CI is one that few today would share without reservations.

To be sure, there is much in the letter that is pleasant and desirable; for instance, traditional Freemasonic obligations of charity to destitute members are reiterated, and members are promised hospitality while visiting distant locations. At its worst, though, the letter presents the O.T.O. as the one true way above all others, denies human rights to non-members, condemns marriage outside the group, demands that members proselytize, and presents strange and disturbing ideas on child-raising and financial matters. It never described the O.T.O. as it actually existed, and today does not describe where it is going. It is a document of mostly historical interest and should no longer be recommended to potential members as an accurate description of the system of the Order.

I am not a spokesperson for the Order, but I have long been associated with it (about nineteen years at this writing) and I have some knowledge of how it functions. Statements in this essay should not be considered authoritative statements of policy, but my personal observations.

THE OPENING

Let us look at how the letter describes itself. Crowley states his intent clearly enough up front, beginning with an address to his treasurer, George Macnie Cowie:

[S]ome persons who are worthy to join the O.T.O. consider the fees and subscriptions rather high. This is due to your failure to explain properly the great advantages offered by the Order.

This is a peculiar opening. If the letter were to be presented as an actual promise to prospective members, it would be a fraudulent promise. Even more strangely, the treasurer is blamed for not misleading people about the actual nature of the Order, and this accusation of failure is inscribed for all time at the head of an official document. Crowley's relationship with Cowie can be traced in his Confessions and in archival materials. He was prone to fits of temper and to blaming others for his own lack of fiscal savvy. Cowie bore the brunt of his attacks.

This mean-spirited opening by itself is probably enough to put off some potential members. It sets an unpleasant tone that continues throughout. It reminds us that what makes Crowley so interesting is that he was in many ways an obnoxious and immature man, and yet his mystical achievements were remarkable. It reminds us that he was a poor leader, that he did not understand groups very well, and that we study him rather than following or emulating him.

ONE TRUE WAY

The letter presents the O.T.O. as not only one beneficial organization, but as the one true way. Its most notorious passage is this:

Members of the Order are to regard those without its pale as possessing no rights of any kind, since they have not accepted the Law, and are therefore, as it were, troglodytes, survivals of a past civilisation, and to be treated accordingly. Kindness should be shown towards them, as towards any other animal, and every effort should be made to bring them into Freedom.

This is the stuff of cult-hunters' nightmares made flesh. The letter says that anyone who is not a member of the Order has no rights, and members are instructed that their duty is to treat non-members as having no rights. The leadership today should make clear to prospective members that they are not expected to become bigots. Indeed, we should be doing our best to discourage bigots from joining. I am glad to say that there are few places in the Order today where such intolerance would find itself welcome.

Even if we were Thelemic bigots, the passage is not well thought out. Suppose we were to grant that people who have not accepted Crowley's religious doctrine ("the Law of Thelema") are somehow defective. Should we think that anyone who is not a member of one particular group, the O.T.O., has not accepted that Law? There are many independent Thelemites, as well as members of other Thelemic groups who find the O.T.O. not to their liking. Are they troglodytes as well?

The idea that the Order is uniquely superior to other groups is repeated later on:

The Order teaches the only perfect and satisfactory system of philosophy, religion, and science, leading its members step by step to knowledge and power hardly even dreamed of by the profane. [Emphasis added.]

These passages underscore another contradiction of Crowley: he was a prophet of "Freedom" who had no respect for the rights of others. In his mind he was the divinely appointed benevolent despot of the new world-age. The only liberty worth having was the liberty of obeying him. Our ideas of freedom have advanced in the twentieth century, and people today who are attracted to the freedom promised by the Thelemic system may encounter some cognitive dissonance in engaging Crowley's authoritarian and intolerant ideals. In the minds of the current membership, more advanced ideas of freedom have won out, but respect for tradition has introduced unfortunate compromises and rationalizations. Instead we should have the courage to admit that in this case, tradition is simply wrong.

GO YE FORTH AND CONVERT

Given Crowley's belief in the unique superiority of the O.T.O., we should not be surprised to find the usual cultic concomitant -- an instruction to go forth, spread the word, and bring back converts. Members of the O.T.O. are ordered to proselytize, not only by opening all conversations with Thelemic slogans, but by passing out pamphlets and going on missionary journeys.

The Brethren shall be diligent in preaching the Law of Thelema. In all writings they shall be careful to use the prescribed greetings; likewise in speech, even with strangers. They shall be diligent in circulating all tracts, manifestos, and all other communications which the Order may from time to time give out for the instruction or emancipation of the profane.

He should also do all in his power to spread the Law, especially taking long journeys, when possible, to remote places, there to sow the seed of the Law.

Again, these instructions do not reflect modern consensus. They seem more appropriate to the Moonies than to us. In today's occult and pagan communities, we usually define ourselves by saying that we do not proselytize. We say that we are happy to let those whose interests coincide with ours join us of their own free will. Again the letter does not express a useful guideline for today, but an historical relic from an overzealous founder, and we could expect some of the better potential members to be repelled rather than attracted by it.

Every Brother is expected to use all his influence with persons in a superior station of life (so called) to induce them to join the Order. Royal personages, ministers of State, high officials in the Diplomatic, Naval, Military, and Civil Services are particularly to be sought after, for it is intended ultimately that the temporal power of the State be brought into the Law, and led into freedom and prosperity by the application of its principles. It's hard to know where to start with this one. It is a plain call for theocracy. When Crowley referred to the group as a vessel for "certain social plans" he meant that it was supposed to take over the governments of the world. This is not its intent today and it

never had any realistic hope of attaining this regrettable goal. At most it may be a sort of alternative government or "temporary autonomous zone" for its members, who prefer to rely on its own internal processes for interacting with other members. Even those members who wish to see the establishment of a Thelemic theocracy (and there are some) mostly resist the suggestion that the O.T.O. illustrates what such a state would be like.

Beyond this, there is again a sort of social cluelessness here. Any who made themselves such pests with persons of status would soon find themselves disinvited from their company. This "inducement" is not today a duty of membership. The happy result is that those of us with friends of prominence are able to keep those friends, treating them as equals and exerting whatever influence we have on them through the ordinary processes of friendship, rather than by nagging them to join a particular group which may or may not be to their taste.

Every Brother is expected to do all in his power to induce his personal friends to accept the Law and join the Order. He should therefore endeavor to make new friends outside the Order, for the purpose of widening its scope.

Not only the powerful, it seems, but every friend whatsoever, is to be regarded largely as potential conversion fodder. Potential members should know that they are not in fact expected to behave in this dehumanizing way.

MIXED MARRIAGE

The letter condemns marriage outside the Order:

It is desirable that the marriage partner of any Brother should also be a member of the Order. Neglect to insist upon this leads frequently to serious trouble for both parties, especially the uninitiate.

This is a relatively temperate form of intolerance by the standards of the letter. We are not forbidden to marry the "troglodytes" and "animals" outside the Order, only discouraged from doing so.

At the same time, there may be something more than intolerance here. Those who have belonged to magical lodges, pagan covens, and such are aware that for only one partner to be involved can put stress on a relationship. It is easy for suspicions to form when one partner frequently returns home late at night, perhaps smelling of incense and a bit tipsy from the ritual. If the group has something to do with nudism or sex magick, that can make the ground even more fertile for suspicion. Nonetheless, there can be and are many healthy relationships of this type. It helps if both partners are friends with the members, even though only one is a member. There is something to this paragraph, but it could stand to be expressed in a more open and humane way.

Members of the Order may expect to find suitable marriage partners in the extremely select body to which they belong. Community of interest and hope being already established, it is natural to suppose that where mutual attraction also exists, a marriage will result in perfect happiness.

This passage reaffirms a preference for marriage within the group. Its idealistic expectation of perfect happiness in such a union may be forgiven as an excess of optimism. However, it does not reflect the actual course of all marriages between members of the group, which are no more stable or happy than marriages in society as a whole. It promises too much.

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

The letter's statements on childbirth and child-rearing are among its strangest, and among the least applicable to either past or current practice.

All pregnant women are especially sacred to members of the Order, and no effort should be spared to bring them to acceptance of the Law of Freedom, so that the unborn may benefit by that impression. They should be induced to become members of the Order, so that the child may be born under its aegis.

There is definitely no such outreach program to convert pregnant women in practice, and the prospective member need have no concern that it will be his or her duty to proselytize any pregnant friends. The particular mythic cycle that is celebrated in the Order does revere pregnancy and childbirth as important symbols on both literal and symbolic planes, but we do not today translate that into a program to convert them.

If the mother that is to be have asserted her will to be so in contempt and defiance of the Tabus of the slave-gods, she is to be regarded as especially suitable to our Order, and the Master of the Lodge in her district shall offer to become, as it were, godfather to the child, who shall be trained specially, if the mother so wishes, as a servant of the Order, in one of its Profess-Houses.

The Order does not raise anyone as its special servant. The Master of a Lodge need not be male, which is assumed in the above passage, and I have not heard of any cases of adoption along the lines described.

As for women who have children "in contempt and defiance of the Tabus of the slave-gods," that is a euphemistic way of referring to children born out of wedlock. While the O.T.O. is a radically sex-positive organization and stands against sexual repression as a point of primary doctrine, we simply make ourselves known as such in trust that those of like mind will be attracted or not as they will. We do not establish programs of the sort described above, as if a common act such as having a child out of wedlock could somehow indicate like-mindedness by itself.

(The thought of "Uncle Aleister's Home for Wayward Girls" is not a pleasant one by any means!)

Women of the Order who are about to become mothers receive all care, attention, and honour from all Brethren.

Special Profess-Houses will be established for their convenience, should they wish to take advantage of them.

Special Profess-Houses for the care of women of the Order, or those whose husbands

or lovers are members of the Order, will be instituted, so that the frontal duty of womankind may be carried out in all comfort and honour.

"The frontal duty of womankind" is said to be childbirth. Crowley's view of woman as primarily intended for childbirth has been dealt with elsewhere, by Content Love Knowles and others. It is an archaic attitude which does not reflect current consensus.

In addition, there are no houses established for caretaking during pregnancy -- though it is not necessarily a bad idea -- and it would be misleading to let prospective female members think otherwise.

Children of all Brethren are entitled to the care of the Order, and arrangements will be made to educate them in certain of the Profess-Houses of the Order. Children of Brethren who are left orphans will be officially adopted by the Master of his Lodge, or if the latter decline, by the Supreme Holy King himself, and treated in all ways as if they were his own.

Brethren who have a right to some especial interest in any child whose mother is not a member of the Order may recommend it especially to the care of their lodges or of Grand Lodge.

These statements reflect a communal attitude toward child-raising which I have not seen practiced. Children of Order members are raised according to the usual societal norms in most cases, which means by the parent(s). The Order does not provide children with schooling; there are no provisions even for the "Sunday school" type of religious education of mainstream Christianity. The Order may in some cases practice charity towards orphans left by deceased members, but there is no guarantee of it, and when it does happen it is handled informally. There is no guarantee of adoption, though in a close-knit community of moderate size it would seem a reasonable expectation. Any adopting parent would not necessarily be the Lodge Master.

MONEY AND PROPERTY

Crowley was accused by his predecessor, Theodor Reuss, of "communistic" ideas, which Crowley angrily denied. However, when we look at his ideas on property, it does seem that he favored the holding of property in common trust. In some ways this is more radical than conventional communism, which only holds that property which is used as "means of production" -- for instance, factory equipment -- should be publicly owned. He also believed that professionals should be obliged to give their services for free to the Order.

None of his ideas about property or profession are currently practiced. Potential members need not be concerned that they will incur obligations of money or services beyond those of dues and voluntary charity.

Every Brother who may possess mines, land, or houses more than he can himself constantly occupy, should donate part of such mines or land, or one or more of such

houses to the Order.

Not only is this not practiced, but the Order currently declines all offers of real property, due to administrative overhead and property taxes. While it may eventually become possible for such gifts to be accepted, they are not required, and it would be very surprising if this changed in the future.

All Brethren are bound by their fealty to offer their service in their particular trade, business, or profession, to the Grand Lodge. For example, a stationer will supply Grand Lodge with paper, vellum, and the like; a bookseller offer any books to the Library of Grand Lodge which the Librarian may desire to possess; a lawyer will execute any legal business for Grand Lodge, and a railway or steamship owner or director see to it that the Great Officers travel in comfort wherever they may wish to go.

In a word, no. Crowley was not a professional, unless prophecy is a profession, and did not realize the very serious problems that such requirements would cause. While gifts of professional service are often appreciated, they are not required, and certainly extensive and compromising gifts of the type specified above would be frowned upon. One can only imagine the airline executive's explanations to the Board of Directors!

In sickness all Brethren have the right to medical or surgical care and attendance from any Brethren of the Lodge who may be physicians, surgeons, or nurses.

As for services which are expensive and which everyone needs, such as medical care and legal advice, it is hard to imagine a better way to discourage aspirants of the affected professions than telling them they are to become permanent pro bono caregivers for the entire group. I think it is no accident that we have few members today who are doctors or lawyers. This is unfortunate, because despite what the letter may say, they would not be expected to sacrifice their careers in this manner.

If the Brother so desire, the entire amount of the fees and subscriptions which he has paid during his life will be handed over by the Order to his heirs and legatees. The Order thus affords an absolute system of insurance in addition to its other benefits. This is not practiced. In my opinion the leadership should take special care, for reasons of liability, to make sure that it does not make false promises of future remuneration of dues.

All Brethren who may fall into indigence have a right to the direct assistance of the Order up to the full amount of fees and subscriptions paid by them up to the time of application. This will be regarded as a loan, but no interest will be charged upon it. That this privilege may not be abused, the Grand Tribunal will decide whether or no such application is made in good faith.

Again, this is not the practice of the Order. It is traditional for fraternal groups to be organized as "benevolent societies," which act as a form of insurance for its members, especially life and burial insurance. The above statements are traditional in that regard and can be traced back to our Freemasonic origins. The O.T.O., however, is not currently organized as a beneficial society or an insurance company, which in my view is just as well. A common complaint about many of the smaller surviving fraternal orders is that they have become nothing but life insurance schemes. Prospective and current

members should be aware that their dues and fees are not payments into any kind of insurance fund.

Members of the IX^o, who share among themselves the whole property of the Order according to the rules of that degree, may, of course, reside there permanently. Indeed, the house of every Brother of this grade is, ipso facto, a Profess-House of the Order. So, ladies, should you become pregnant, be sure to drop in on the local IX^o's house for a few months of free room and board!

In all seriousness, this is somewhat true and somewhat false. The property of the Order is held by its corporate entity, not by its inner circle. There are no Profess Houses per se in the Order, though there have always been discussions of establishing them. If they were established they would not exist exactly as described in the letter. On the other hand, members of the IX^o do administer the Order's property, and do practice some form of personal hospitality which could perhaps be considered a partial implementation of a Profess House. The passage is ambiguously true but largely misleading.

OCCUPATION AND CLASS

The class assumptions of the O.T.O. are derived from Crowley's Victorian background and have little applicability to most of us today.

Personal or domestic attendants should be chosen from among the members of the Order when possible, and great tact and courtesy are to be employed in dealing with them.

They, on their part, will render willing and intelligent service.

While in Lodge, and on special occasions, they are to be treated as Brothers, with perfect equality; such behaviour is undesirable during the hours of service, and familiarity, subversive as it is of all discipline and order, is to be avoided by adopting a complete and marked change of manner and address.

Reading this merry and unthinking endorsement of traditional English social class discrimination, the modern American is likely to shudder a bit. It is interesting to note how much our ideas of freedom are different from Crowley's, and amusing to observe that he probably thought he was being progressive at the time.

As explained above, Brethren are entirely free of most legal burdens, since lawsuits are not permitted within the Order, and since they may call upon the legal advisers of the Order to defend them against their enemies in case of need.

Again, no one should join thinking they are likely to obtain any free legal advice. The Order does not have crack teams of attorneys ready to spring to its members' defense, and what attorneys it may have among its membership are not required to give pro bono service to other members.

The Order offers great social advantages to its members, bringing them as it does into constant association with men and women of high rank.

I don't know quite how to say this, but in fact the membership of the Order today is not made up of people who are "of high rank," whatever that might mean in this day and age. Just as the phrase "pagan poverty level" has become a commonplace among our relatives in the modern witchcraft movement and its offshoots, we find ourselves largely made up of those who do not share the overarching social values that require money and title as measures of success. Many of us are successful in conventional careers, but I have yet to meet a corporate CEO, a military general, a major celebrity, or the like in the O.T.O. I do not think we are any the worse for this but it seems important to correct the mistaken promise of the letter.

The Order offers extraordinary opportunities to its members in their trades, businesses, or professions, aiding them by co-operation, and securing them clients or customers. There are some career opportunities to be pursued in some bodies of the Order, but not all. The membership has never been large enough to fulfill the promise given here. A business that relied on the O.T.O. to provide customers would soon be forced into bankruptcy. Help in a professional career path, as opposed to the occasional service job, would be a hit or miss proposition given the small size of the membership. One would generally have better chances dealing with other members of one's chosen profession than relying on one's scattered colleagues within the Order.

It is perhaps worth noting here that Crowley never held a regular job, starting adult life as an heir and later living off donations, and it would be unrealistic to expect him to have understood the career potential within a group.

NOT REALLY

There are a few other miscellaneous provisions of the letter which are not practiced.

They shall respond heartily to every summons of the Lodge or Chapter to which they may belong, not lightly making excuse.

In fact, in current practice there is no such thing as a mandatory meeting of a Camp, Oasis or Lodge. Attendance is on a voluntary basis. At least one body has had to be corrected in this regard in recent years.

Colleges of the Order will presently be established where the children of its members may be trained in all trades, businesses, and professions, and there they may study the liberal arts and humane letters, as well as our holy and arcane science. Brethren are expected to do all in their power to make possible the establishment of such Universities.

This is not necessarily a bad idea. Many good universities and colleges have been founded by religious groups. However, it is entirely beyond the resources of the Order at this stage of its development, and I know of no serious plans to put it into effect at any point in the foreseeable future.

The crime of slander, which causes so great a proportion of human misery, is rendered extremely dangerous, if not impossible, within the Order by a clause in the Obligation of the Third Degree.

One could only hope. Sadly, the truth is that this clause has not been effective in banishing slander within the Order. It is impossible to discuss the issue in detail within this forum, but anyone who thinks that by joining they will be effectively protected against the slander of other members is likely to have a rude awakening. That is not to say that slander is commonly practiced, but in any group of religious people, there are some who love to moralize and excoriate, and the O.T.O. is not, unfortunately, the single religious group in human history that has managed to rid itself of this failing. It is a worthwhile goal but if we are ever to achieve it we will have to find a better way than the aforementioned clause.

CONCLUSION

The Open Letter is a historical artifact which should be preserved just as it is, as part of the inheritance of the Order. However, it desperately needs to be placed in its proper context, as representative of Crowley's ideals for what the Order might some day become. If it is presented as an actual set of requirements and promises on the current membership, it is misleading, even fraudulent at places. Its more unrealistic and intolerant passages may have already cost us worthy members, who have read the letter and decided that they would not care to be associated with the imaginary organization described therein. We should set about creating a better description, and relegate this one to the archives where it belongs.

(Author's note: An earlier draft of this essay inspired Sabazius X° to issue a clarification on the current interpretation of Liber CI. His clarification now resides on the O.T.O. web site.)

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Pagan History

by Tim Maroney (1986)

Paganism is a loose word for the large variety of polytheistic, shamanistic, and mystical non-monotheistic religions. Paganism exists in all cultures, from paleolithic to technological, but has historically waxed and waned. The ancient Egyptians are an example of a highly pagan society; so are the ancient Romans; and all paleolithic cultures from the Old Stone Age to the present have strong pagan elements. An example of a less pagan culture would be the West for the last thousand years or so, since the centuries following the Fall of Rome. The domination of the Middle East by Christians and Moslems has also largely shut out paganism.

Characteristic of paganism is a tolerance for other paganistic ideas, even those that literally contradict one's own. Such persecutions as have been directed against paganistic religions by each other are by-products of political struggles and mass population movements rather than ideologically motivated. The same is to some extent true of early Judaism, which was the direct inheritor to the traditions of a strongly pagan

society. A slave revolt apparently led to a few hundred thousand slaves with no place to live; to get them, they butchered the inhabitants of pagan cities and took up residence in the cities themselves. They invoked their war god to justify this action. Similarly, when the beginnings of the modern Greek mythology were laid down, it was as a result of invading Northern barbarians supplanting the earlier (and somewhat gynocentric) Titan mythology with their imported religion, which grew more refined and less aggressive later on, as happened with Judaism.

Before it came under the thumb of monotheism, the West was dominated by the highly civilized Roman culture. The Roman Republic and Empire were characterized by an unusually large number of religions together in a single social whole, frequently sharing the same geography and even the same temples. This explicitly eclectic (or "syncretistic", as it is more usually known in studies of the Romans) synthesis is more similar to modern neo-paganism than any other form of historical paganism I know of. However, it ended after the Christian emperors took over and Rome fell.

The post-pagan West experienced frequent resurgences of paganism in various forms. If we date this at 1000 CE for convenience, we see first the Inquisitorial period, where paganism was punished with death and torture. Then there comes the Renaissance, in which pagan symbolism and ideas in art and philosophy were somewhat more common than explicitly Christian ones. The Renaissance lasted until the 16th century. Note that the Inquisitions lasted effectively until the Enlightenment period, and were bad during the Renaissance, but ceased to be mostly ideologically motivated after the first three centuries. The Inquisition had become a political arm of the Vatican, a force useful in many ways other than suppressing heresy. It spent much of its time accomplishing political, antifeminist, and covert goals of the Church. We see in the trial of the Templars in the fourteenth century that uncommonly faithful people were caught in a secular political struggle between the King of France and the Pope. They were routinely tortured, the usual prompted confessions were given, and they were executed, for reasons having nothing to do with ideology or heresy except as excuses.

It is also during the Renaissance that we begin to have evidence of what we may consider explicitly religious paganism again. Most of the grimoires we have date from this era; alchemists, often overtly Christian but employing pagan symbolism and texts, were most common during the Renaissance; the Kabbalah and Tarot originate in the Renaissance, forming the backbone of modern pagan symbolism. The Renaissance also saw the obscure origins of a rebirth, in improved form, of Greek humanism, technically pagan because of its suppression by Christian Rome and its use of theistic symbols.

The Reformation was again a less pagan period; Protestant rulers like Elizabeth and James carried out their own anti-heresy pogroms, annihilating most evidence of witchcraft. Of particular interest in the Reformation is Scot's "The Discoverie of Witchcraft", which presents the humanist and rationalist perspective on witches which has generally triumphed today: that witch accusations were more often driven by factors such as ugliness, personal enmity, poverty, and so forth than on ideological grounds,

and that in fact there were no witches. This is probably true only of the later Inquisitorial period. Earlier on, the Inquisition certainly did help in the temporary stamping out of paganism; so if pagans are witches, there were witches.

We need not bother much with Murray's supposedly anthropological study of English witchcraft in the Inquisitorial period, except to note that it has been devoutly accepted by many modern pagans, and to point out some of its flaws. Based on late Inquisitorial evidence and the consistency of the confessions obtained by the Inquistors, and tossing in some disjointed scraps of English folk history and legend, Murray asks us to believe that a paleolithic subculture lasted in England, living semi-naked in the bushes, until nearly the beginning of the Reformation at least, and possibly until the current day. Of course late Inquistorial confessions were consistent; they were practically dictated to the torture victim. A much better account of the relationship of paganism to Christianity before and during England's post-pagan period is Jessi Weston's classic "From Ritual to Romance". Its conclusions were derived from decades of intense study of the Grail mythology and its anthropological, mythological, and social context.

As a parting note on the Reformation, we may note the peculiar phenomenon of court astrologers and alchemists and their ilk, the most notable examples being the sorcerer John Dee and the seer Edward Kelley under Elizabeth. These were the inheritors of Paracelsus and the other alchemists and Christian medicine doctors, using pagan symbols and methods with a veil of Christian symbolism. Kelley stopped the work of Dee and Kelley under unknown circumstances; he is said to have been told by the angels to form a group sex arrangement with Dee and his wife, which they supposedly did for a while; in another version, Kelley was driven from the work by a prophecy of a new age dawning, which was heresy.

So, on to the Enlightenment of the seventeenth century. This was more humanistic than religious, though humanism is a religion on alternate Tuesdays; it all depends which of the many reasonable definitions you use. In any case, the seventeenth centuries saw the first applications of the renewed Greek humanism that originated in the Renaissance. The counter-Christian current was running stronger; more and more, people were beginning to demand equal treatment for all, and freedom from the rigid boundaries of thought and expression imposed on them by governments and churches alike. This humanism has colored most "opposition" religious movements in America since this time, much for the better in my opinion. This is because principles of respect for the individual were put into the American system of government (as an afterthought - the humanistic heyday had ended in the 1780's in America, and the new would-be ruling class had to be forcibly reminded), and the governmental structure was such that it was able to make progress in its understanding of freedom.

Things did not work out quite so well in France's humanistic revolution, largely due to Robespierre, the atheistic moral grandfather of Stalin and Pol Pot. He interpreted opposition to monarchy as punishing high birth with low death, and then set out ruthlessly to purge opposition and deviation. Soon monarchy was re-established in France.

The nineteenth century was a period of resurgence of paganism. The neo-classical movement was explicitly devoted to rediscovering the virtues of the highly pagan societies Rome and Greece. This movement was to be by far the dominant force of the century. Humanism was further applied to the institution of slavery, resulting in war and social upheaval. The Prometheans such as Blake, Shelley, Byron, and so forth were widely considered to be among the greatest luminaries of the period.

The method of science and its results made available much more information on religions of the East and of less civilized cultures. Contact between religiously different but politically equal forces invariably leads to mutual excuses for the other, largely to help keep trade going, but also as a result of time spent in foreign climes observing the practice of religion. This creates, although not in great numbers at first, a different attitude toward religions than the dogmatic denial of all other religions possible only under a large and self-sufficient monolithic theocracy. Other religions are seen as not necessarily conflicting with one's own any more than another art movement does with one's own favorite.

There was a more open resurgence of sorcery in less overtly Christian forms, particularly in the last half of the century. This attracted many notable adherents, and from the publication of "The Magus" by Barrett in 1801, the movement created a magical library in modern English which is still widely read and used. It used the work of Renaissance magicians, court sorcerors, Kabalists, and so forth, and attempted to apply the psychological principles of the day in various original fudgings. There was also the Theosophical movement, largely discredited by Blavatsky's proven cheating on tests of psychic powers, and rather more like spiritualism with Eastern allusions than any Eastern religion.

The psychical movement, which changed its name to parapsychology, grew out of spiritualism, which grew out of mesmerism, which was apparently fairly original and totally ludicrous, but did yield the secret of hypnotism. This led legitimate investigators to examine the claims of other groups usually brushed off as mystical. The early Society for Psychical Research, founded in 1882 and led by prominent scientists such as the American psychologist William James, was formed "first, to carry on systematic experimentation with hypnotic subjects, mediums, clairvoyants, and others; and, secondly, to collect evidence concerning apparitions, haunted houses, and similar phenomena which are incidentally reported, but which, from their fugitive nature, admit of no deliberate control."

It is to be noted that there is still, a century later, no replicable experiment to demonstrate the existence of anything but hypnotic subjects in this list. It is also worth noting that while general models of the layout of the psyche continue to be employed in psychotherapy, there is still no generally agreed upon experimental methodology to falsify features of these models. Finally, it should be noted that the ritual magic methods employed by many pagans, in other times as well as today, still have not been placed under real scientific scrutiny to determine whether or not they produce any physically